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**THE
RED HEART OF RUSSIA**

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TO
FOUR WHO SAW THE SUNRISE

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**THE
RED HEART OF RUSSIA**

THE RED HEART OF RUSSIA

CHAPTER I

\ THREE GOOD SAMARITANS

PETROGRAD!

Out there in the silver twilight of the white night she lay, a forest of flaming church steeples and giant factory chimneys, rising vaguely from the marshes. I pressed my face closer to the dust-crusted windowpane and searched the flying landscape.

There on the edge of the East she waited for us, strange, mysterious, inscrutable, compelling—a candle drawing us on from the ends of the earth like so many fluttering moths.

Twelve long, hot, dusty days the Trans-Siberian Express had been crawling toward her,—crawling like a snake across flower-strewn steppe and velvet forest,—the one unclean thing upon this new-born world of spring.

I glanced at my wrist-watch—it was twenty

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minutes past two on a morning in early June of the year 1917. Here we were, despite war and revolution, peeping into Peter's "Window" only four hours behind schedule.

Involuntarily I breathed a tiny sigh of disappointment. Nothing, nothing, had happened. Even the dreary, desolate Siberian wastes had failed to live up to their promise. Six thousand versts of emerald meadows, cut with shimmering china-blue waterways, stretched behind us. Six thousand versts of meadows, covered with a mist of wild flowers—pink, mauve, and flaming yellow—and broken frequently with deep woods, where silver birches played like sunshine against the shadowed background of dusky pines—that was Siberia.

At every log station, with its red flags and its row of poplars, a crowd of front-bound soldiers, in worn, dun-colored uniforms, tried to board the train, only to settle peacefully back to more interminable hours of waiting when the Committee of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies, traveling with us, had explained the necessity.

Occasionally in the night we were suddenly awakened, when the door of our compartment was

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thrown open by a guard searching for an escaped Austrian prisoner. Otherwise, the monotony of our journey had remained unbroken.

Well, it was done. Ten minutes more, and Petrograd would open the door of a new world to us. I glanced down the car at a row of passionate faces flattened against the windows, while hungry eyes drank deep of once familiar scenes. They were home-bound exiles, these companions of mine, going back to a land whose door had long been closed in their faces. Home! Every click of the wheels carried me farther and farther away from that scrap of earth on the other side of the world which I called home.

My mind wandered back to that sunny day, two months before, when through a mist of tears I had watched the hills of California disappear behind the Golden Gate. How blithely I had come away! Blithely, because I knew that mine was a land where the latch-string was always out, and I could go back again at a moment's choosing.

I tried to think what it must be to be coming home to the land of the bolted door, to the land of the black scowl—the land that had suddenly thrown down its bars and turned a friendly, smil-

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ing face and open arms toward the lonely outcasts.

My eyes wandered to the vestibule, where a Siberian soldier sat upon his kit-bag, a tin can with a bunch of dead lilies-of-the-valley held tightly in his two hands. For ten days and ten nights he had sat there, his big, round, brown eyes looking out across the great spaces, resignation and the infinite patience of these people of the East and the North reflected in his face. Home for him was done up in that little bunch of lilies-of-the-valley, long since dead. Every day I had passed him on my way to the dining-car, and my body ached with vicarious weariness as I saw him uncomplainingly sitting and dreaming over the faded lilies. He and I, of all the passengers, were the only ones who were not going home.

My musings were suddenly cut short. The Trans-Siberian Express, train de luxe of the longest railroad in the world, was slipping quietly to its place beside a deserted platform. A clean-cut young Englishman, on his way to be married in Petrograd, adjusted his coat collar the final time, and patted his hat to see that it was placed at the proper angle. Then he put his head out

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of the window to receive the first welcoming smile of the sweetheart he had not seen for a year. He drew his head in again, surprise, pain, embarrassment mingled on his fine, boyish face. She was not there.

Farther down the aisle, Count Tolstoy, son of the great Tolstoy, returning from America, lifted his window and searched the vacant platform for the face of his wife. He, too, turned back disappointed. Petrograd was as unaware of us as though we had been so many ghosts flitting invisibly through the air. Petrograd was entirely engrossed in its own very important affairs. Even the station-master had failed to take cognizance of our coming. In the absence of porters, we trucked our own baggage; and we had to wake up the guard to unlock the door and let us through.

Outside, the big circle was flooded with the light of the white night. My eyes focused for a moment on Trubetskoy's squat, heavy, powerful granite man on horseback, Alexander III,—symbol of departed Romanoffs, symbol of dead Russia,—then wandered about in dazed bewilderment.

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The cobblestones were dotted with men and women gathered in groups and talking in high-pitched, excited voices, eyes blazing and arms waving: students, peasants, soldiers, workmen, pouring a torrent of words into the night.

"What is the matter? Is it another revolution?" I asked breathlessly.

"No," some one answered, "nothing is happening. They are just talking. It has been like this ever since March."

"But it's the middle of the night," I said. "It's nearly morning. Something must be wrong."

"They talk all day and all night, all the time," my informant continued. "In the old days, you know, they were not allowed to talk, and now that the dam is broken, the flood of language never stops."

One lone and dilapidated carriage, drawn by a bored and weary looking horse, with head framed in a high wooden collar, stood at the curb. A Russian came through the door, and shouted, apparently into the air, a single magic word: "Iz-vostchik!"

A perambulating feather-bed in voluminous

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folds of blue broadcloth detached itself from the nearest crowd, swept its broadcloth train majestically over the sidewalk, and mounted the box. The carriage rattled away, the linguistically accomplished Russian and all his bags stowed neatly within. I watched this achievement with undisguised admiration and envy, blankly wondering what I should do next.

A fellow traveler, a Swedish girl on her way home from Japan to be married to an English officer, joined me. Behind her waddled the stout and pleasing person of the Finnish missionary who with her "many luggages" had shared my compartment from Harbin.

We held a consultation. Here we were, all utterly alone at half-past two in the morning, in this great, strange city which talked on and on without even a glance in our direction. Our telegrams to friends were probably traveling in the mail-bags on the same train or coming along on next week's express.

A young Russian officer came gallantly to the rescue.

"I telegraphed for a room—you ladies can have that," he said; and, turning to me: "If you will

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stay and mind the luggage, we will go uptown and see about it."

The last thing in the world I wanted to do at that moment was to stay and mind the luggage. The station was hot, close, and dirty. Soldiers—wearied brown men in worn uniforms, unwashed and unshaven—asleep on their kit-bags or curled up on the floor in their overcoats, lay so thick that you had to pick your way carefully. I was tired of places that were close and dirty. I longed to be out in those strange, wide streets, so full of people with so many things to say that the days were not long enough. Politeness set a seal upon desire. My friends promised to be back in twenty minutes, so I returned to the stuffy waiting-room, and the odd assortment of bags and bundles for which I was to be responsible.

There was a clock on the wall, and the minute-hand slowly made its way around the dial. An hour passed—it was half-past three. Still no sign of the Russian gallant. The minute-hand began another journey.

Once for a few seconds I forgot the minute-hand. The waiter from the dining-car, who had grown more and more stepmotherly in the dis-

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tribution of portions as the journey progressed, entered the room. He walked to the corner where half a dozen bundles of soiled table linen were stacked, and, glancing about to see that no one was looking, he swiftly untied them. From the center of each he took a fifty-pound sack of white flour. It was no longer difficult to explain the sparkling stones from the Ural Mountains appearing on the hands of the dining-car crew as the train pulled out of Vyatka, or difficult to believe the stories of the five-hundred-ruble game in progress in the dining-car of evenings. Flour in Petrograd was scarcer than Ural brilliants and far more highly priced.

At a quarter to five my friends returned. There was not a room to be had in Petrograd, they said. The Hotel Europe was crowded. At the France they were sleeping in the sitting-rooms. The Astoria, which had been the best hotel in town, was occupied by the military, and no civilians were allowed.

The Russian suggested that we stay where we were until the populace began to wake up,—about ten o'clock,—then consult our respective consuls. Nothing on earth could have induced

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me at that moment to spend five seconds longer in the fetid atmosphere of that station. Five hours was a prospect I refused even to contemplate.

The guard was once more asleep and the door locked. I made my way through a labyrinth of baggage-rooms to an opening on a side street. The same groups of men were still excitedly talking, and here and there along the curb a peasant woman, with a market-basket of hard-boiled eggs, cucumbers, lemons, or sunflower seeds, offered her wares.

I paused at the corner and speculated as to which road to take. The Nevsky Prospect, famous as the Champs Elysées, the Strand, and Fifth Avenue, though I knew it not for itself at the moment, stretched wide before me in one direction. To my left was another street only slightly narrower, and flanked on either side by towering buildings, large enough to house a world of little people like myself. Surely, in all those great masses of wood and stucco and stone, there was some little corner where I could put my weary head. I walked in a daze, peering up at the strange painted signs. If it had been an

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overcoat, a cheese, or a pair of boots for which I had been searching, it would have been quite simple; for the little shops were profusely covered with frightful paintings of all these things, designed for people who, like myself, could not read.

Three blocks from the station I came upon a huge ornate gray building, rambling around three sides of a court. There was an air of elegance about the place, and on one of the doors was a small brass sign, which looked as though it might be designed for people who could read. I picked out the letters one by one, trying frantically to remember whether the English *r* was the Russian *p* or vice versa. The building had the look of a hotel. It might as easily have been a theater, or a palace, or the police-station, for all the intelligence those strange letters conveyed to me.

I was just screwing up my courage to the point of entering when an *izvostchik* drove up to the door, and Count Tolstoy and the lost wife stepped out. He came quickly to the rescue.

"Yes, yes, this is the Select Hotel," he said. "If you will step inside I will ask if there is a room for you, and perhaps you would like to take

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my *izvostchik* back to the station for your baggage. But first the passportist must have your passport."

Five minutes later I was back at the depot, announcing the news to the astounded group, and gathering the weary women and the "many luggages" into the ramshackle old carriage. At six o'clock the wild pigeons in the courtyard sang me to sleep.

I awoke with a start six hours later. "Where am I?" I asked. "In Petrograd," I answered myself—"in Petrograd, in the heart of the Revolution." The midday sun, creeping through the window of my tiny room, made all its imperfections pitifully plain. I was grateful to that room as to a stranger who had found me homeless and opened her door, but I wanted to be quickly away, out into the exciting promise of the blue-and-gold day. I dressed hurriedly and ran through a stack of letters of introduction, but discarded them all. On a slip of paper I found an address, "Moika 64." It was the home of a newspaper man—a fellow correspondent, an old friend. On this day I needed an old friend. I

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would find Moika 64, and on the way I would stop for breakfast at the Hotel Europe.

It was all quite simple, you see. Where were those threatening dangers poured like poison into my ears? Petrograd was like any other place. The clerk at the desk answered my simple English request for directions with a shake of his head and a volley of Russian, from which I fled in laughing despair.

Once outside, I made my way to that wide street rejected earlier in the morning. There was an air of importance about it, something that made me feel it led to that nebulous locality which in every city we call "uptown."

A dozen street-cars passed me. They were crowded with soldiers who filled seats, aisles, and platforms, and overflowed on to the steps. I hailed one, and squirmed my way through the faded uniforms to the woman conductor in blue broadcloth and gold buttons.

"Pazhal'sta, Hotel Europe?" I said, exhausting in one breath half of my entire Russian vocabulary.

She shook her head, a simple gesture that I

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understood perfectly, then followed it with a volley of language which left me dazed. She looked at my blank and bewildered face.

"American," I said. Again she shook her head. Then a great light broke into her face.

"Amerikanka, da, da, da!" she said, and laughed in pleased delight at her discovery.

I handed her my paper with Moika 64 upon it. It was written in English and conveyed nothing to her.

By this time the entire car had become interested. A simple-looking woman, with a *platok* on her head, took the paper, and she and two companions consulted long and earnestly over it. They motioned me to wait. The car moved slowly up the wide wood-paved Nevsky; past faded brick and yellow stucco palaces, whose proud sides were pasted with revolutionary posters and proclamations; past the great Gostinny Dvor (Court of the Strangers), where the little shops were shuttered now in Sabbath seclusion behind the hedge of linden trees.

Like the muddy water in a stream, the endless procession of khaki-clad soldiers flowed along the street. The feather-bed *izvostchiks*, calling en-

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couragement to their horses, rattled over the wooden cobbles. Under the columns of the great Kazan Cathedral, the little people, dwarfed by the mighty proportions of this pile of masonry, passed back and forth, crossing themselves and dropping alms into the hands of beggars on the wide steps. On the gravel-covered paths in the formal garden the children played hop-sotch, while their parents sat on the benches, contentedly watching them.

On every corner, and in between streets, the groups of people were talking, talking, talking! Ambulances and field hospital wagons, decorated with red flags and green boughs, and filled with crippled soldiers and Red Cross nurses, darted in from side streets and all hurried off in the same direction.

Quite abruptly we turned a corner and skirted the edges of a pleasant park, with trees in full leaf, and a multitude of birds noisily chattering in the young spring green. Ivan in khaki, with Vera beside him in her best spring clothes, strolled along the winding paths, or sat contentedly munching sunflower seeds, and talking as volubly as the noisy sparrows up above.

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Peace, joy, exultation, was upon that spring-clad city. Freedom was young then, like the spring, like the leaves on the trees, like Vera and Ivan. Freedom was a butterfly upon a high bush, the sheen still upon her wings; and Vera and Ivan looked, rejoiced, and feared to touch—so new, so beautiful, so fragile.

Poor Ivan! Poor Vera! They could not guess that afternoon, any more than I, what the months would do to their butterfly treasure. They could not know that they themselves would soon lay violent hands upon it, and the day would come when the broken wings would lie crushed like a blade of grass beneath a heavy boot. They could not know that Freedom must return in many other guises before she would be strong enough for Russia's need.

Eyes and ears hungrily drinking in strange sights and sounds, and thoughts darting back and forth from the land of Tolstoy, Turgenieff, and Dostoievsky to the Russia of Ivan's dreaming, I almost forgot that I had a destination, and a rapidly increasing appetite.

Suddenly one of the three women who had

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taken me under their wings touched me on the shoulder and motioned me to follow. She left her friends, and together we walked blocks and blocks, while she searched silently for street numbers, and I tried to look the gratitude I could not speak. Finally she stopped, smiling happily, and pointed to a sign that read "64." Then, with a cheery, friendly "Dosvidanya!" (Good-bye!), she left me.

I knocked on the first door. The *dvornik* shook his head. Then I tried the second. I battered at a dozen before I realized that in Russia the entire building has the same number. At last, up five flights of stairs, I found a gleam of recognition in the eyes of the servant. She made it clear by means of the sign language that there was no one at home. But at sight of my crest-fallen face she invited me in, and for half an hour tried vainly to reach my friend by telephone. She wept with exasperation at her inability to help me, and to make herself understood.

It was half-past three when I found myself again on the tree-bordered canal. I was still without breakfast or luncheon, and heaven and

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the Russians only knew what had become of the Hotel Europe. Both seemed to be involved in a conspiracy of silence on the subject.

I wandered up the canal, stopping every likely and unlikely person to ask if they spoke English. Always I got the same headshake and the same kindly "Nyet, nyet, barishna!"

I came out upon a huge square, crowded with ambulances and field-wagons, automobiles, and trucks, filled with crippled soldiers and sailors, men from the ranks who had already paid the heavy toll of war,—armless men and legless men, and men with eyes to which sight would never come back,—all were pleading with their able-bodied brothers to fight to a victorious conclusion.

It was a war demonstration, a pitiful, futile attempt of the broken men to rally their brothers to a standard they were rapidly deserting. For the first time, my eyes were seeing what war does to human flesh. I stood there, watching the faces of these men, listening to the unintelligible torrent of eloquence that poured from their lips, and thought sorrowfully of another country half way across the world making ready for this,

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Finally I recalled my quest. Surely in all that vast throng there must be some one who spoke English. I walked in and out, trying one and another; meeting always with that same bewildered headshake, and that same sympathetic glance of true regret which every Russian, be he prince or peasant, gives you when he is unable to do the thing you ask.

I crossed the square, walking aimlessly I knew not where. On the corner was a huge building with high, boarded windows and bullet-holes in the plastered walls. A man was sitting in the doorway, and I asked if he spoke English. He shook his head. I did not know which way to turn. For some strange reason that I shall never fathom, I walked through the doorway and into the building.

I found myself in a huge, empty marble lobby, opening into a series of large rooms stripped bare of everything but a broken plate-glass cabinet of silver inlay, and a bloodstained but once bright rose-colored velvet carpet. I stood wondering where I was, and what I should do next, when down the broad stairs came a Russian officer in the splendid full-skirted wine-colored coat of the

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Caucasians. His dark olive face and black hair were topped with a high military hat, and a sword of inlaid silver jangled on each marble step as he walked.

"Pardon, do you speak English?" I asked in a faint and by this time rather despairing voice.

He clicked his spurs together, and bowed low before me.

"A leetle, madame," he answered. "Can I be of service to you?"

Never again will the sound of my native tongue be such blissful music. I told him of my recent arrival, and of my search for friends, and ended with:

"I want to go somewhere where I can get something to eat."

He looked at me out of smiling and kindly brown eyes.

"This is a hotel," he said. "The Astoria Hotel. But it is now the headquarters of the military, the Voina Gostinnitsa (War Hotel), and civilians are not allowed. At the time of the Revolution it was sacked, as you can see; so the dining-room has been closed since, and meals are served only in one's room. If you had a room

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you might have luncheon here. Are you the wife of a military man, or something of that sort?"

I shook my head, told him I was nothing "of that sort," and offered my card and credentials. He brightened.

"Ah!" he said. "There may yet be a way. The correspondents are under the control of the military now, and it is just possible the General might make an exception and permit you to stay here. Shall I take you to him?"

I glanced at him for a single searching second, then nodded. We climbed the marble stairs, and at the end of a long corridor we came upon the General, white-haired and white-whiskered, and all that a Russian General should be. He arose from behind a flat-top mahogany desk, bowed low, kissed my hand, and invited me to a seat.

My new-found Caucasian friend explained me in Russian, and the General nodded.

Fifteen minutes later, comfortably established in my own little blue-and-white room on the sixth floor of the War Hotel, amid all the conveniences of a first-class American hotel, I sat down to a platter of cold meat and a service of steaming Russian tea. Another hour found me collecting

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typewriter and passports and preparing to establish a base of operations from which to explore that vast new Russia.

That night, on the roof-garden of the Europe, overlooking the glistening domes and spires of the City of Peter, I dined with friends. I had stumbled upon them when I had ceased to look.

"Where are you stopping?" one of them asked.

"At the War Hotel," I answered.

Mouths and eyes opened in chorus.

"But it is impossible!" they said. "That is for the military, and they are most strict that no civilian be admitted."

I told them the story of the three Good Samaritans—of the little woman with the shawl over her head, who left the car, her friends, and her own pleasure, to walk blocks through the scorching sun with a total stranger; of the maid who almost wept in her distress because she could not help me; and, last, of the dark-haired knight of the Caucasus, who made Cinderella's fairy godmother seem a mere stepmother by comparison.

Back in the little blue-and-white room, wrapped in the warm glow of their kindness, I sat down in a bewildered heap to think it over.

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My mind wandered far that night,—into the black past of Russia, and into the vague unknown future,—but never did it even remotely suspect the stirring times that room and I would share together in the year to come.

CHAPTER II

DIPLOMATS—OFFICIAL AND OTHERWISE

It was less than a week after my early morning advent in Petrograd when I once more passed before the candle-lighted ikons in the Nicolaiski Station and out to the platform. This time the station was far from deserted. A line of soldiers, a picked escort of stalwart men in dun-colored coats, stood at attention. The tall, dark, handsome young Foreign Minister, Tereshchenko, towered above the genial white-vested person of the American Ambassador Francis. The American colony was out in force.

The Provisional Government of Russia, successor of Tsar and bureaucracy, between Cabinet-crises and food problems, had found time to prepare to entertain. Ambassador-Extraordinary Root and the special diplomatic mission to Russia were due to arrive at any moment.

Earlier in the day I had wandered curiously through the great corridors of the rambling old

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Winter Palace and watched the servants putting the finishing touches upon the mansion of the Czars. With the true Russian sense of the dramatic, the new hosts of all the Russias had chosen to be at home to their republican brothers from over the seas in the very premises where royal heads were once held highest and lackeys' backs once bent lowest.

The huge red stucco building—acres and acres of it—had been swept and dusted and polished until Nicholas himself could have found no spot at which to point the imperial finger of disapproval. The big mahogany bath-tub in the ambassador's suite had been scrubbed for the last time. The nudity of the tiny ultra-modern brass bed, cowering behind the crushed-mulberry curtains, had been only partly covered with fresh linen and a new silk eiderdown quilt. The huge oval-topped mahogany table from which Peter the Great had taken his caviar and vodka was prepared to serve ham and eggs American style. As I looked from behind the pink silk curtains out on the blue waters of the Neva, sparkling in the spring sunshine, I wondered what the coming of these Americans would mean to Russia.

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While official Russia was getting ready to welcome my countrymen, I had been trying to find out what unofficial Russia was thinking about. With the help of an interpreter, I had been listening to the babble of voices that sounded through the golden days and white nights. Already I had learned that revolution is a term as variable as truth, and newly mined by every man who speaks it.

I discovered that the Revolution that overthrew the Tsar and absolutism was a simple thing, beautifully logical, gloriously unanimous. Every one wanted it; every one was glad when it came. The monarchy that had brought such desperate misery to the millions crumbled to dust with the first vigorous blow of the rising peoples like a thing long since dead. The heavy heart of Russia lifted in a mighty shout of joy: "Svoboda! (Freedom.) We are free!"

For the moment this was enough. That single word, with its age-old power of placing man on the mountain-tops, made Russia happy.

Soon her people began to be specific.

"Freedom for the peasant," they said. "Freedom for the worker." "Freedom for the sol-

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dier.” “Freedom for the Jew.” “Freedom for women.”

Russia still rejoiced, but with certain vague mental reservations faintly disturbed by this diversity. Then came definition. Each man translated revolution into the terms of his own life.

Nicolai Voronoff, whom I met at dinner one night, voiced the conservative intellectuals' idea of freedom.

“Things could not go on as they were,” he said. “We had to have freedom. Freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of assembly, inviolability of person—freedom as you Americans and English know it.”

Old Chekmar, the peasant delegate from a remote south Russian village, spoke of freedom in terms of land.

“Freedom for the peasant,” he said. “Yes, yes, land—we shall have land. The Tsar Alexander gave it to us when he freed the serfs, but the landlords have kept it away. Mother earth—it is ours at last!—God's and the people's.”

Chekmar tossed his fine old head in a gesture of pride and exaltation as he said it, and his dull

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blue eyes were lit with the fervor of young ideals.

The same light was in the eyes of Andrey Krugloff, from the great Putiloff works, when he said: "Freedom for the worker. The day of the proletariat has come. The men who use the tools shall control them, the fruits of labor shall belong to labor. We will put an end to capitalistic exploitation; we will do away with poverty; the workers of the world shall unite."

Ivan Borovsky, who had come from the front to attend the all-Russian convention of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies, saw freedom in terms of the soldiers. "Peace, peace," he said. "We dig our graves and call them trenches. What is the use of freedom to a man in his grave? We will stop this bloody slaughter. This is not our war. This is the Tsar's war. The soldiers of all the world shall rise as we have done. They will throw off the yokes of kings and kaisers, and we will all make peace. There shall be no more court-martial, no more capital punishment. We will have honest, democratic peace. Then we can go back to our farms and our factories and put an end to all wars."

Little curly blond-haired Petroff, who brought

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me my morning *chei* (tea), with a smile that sparkled like the sunshine on the Neva, defined revolution in his own way when he refused to accept my first tip. "We are free now," he explained. "We will get our regular per cent of the bill for service."

So it went. Revolution was to every man the sum of his desires. Yet above and beneath and beyond each man's interpretation was the deeper thing that old Chekmar voiced when he spoke of land as "God's and the people's." It was not only of himself that Chekmar thought when he said, "It is ours!" Personal greed could never have brought that light into his dull blue eyes. Something more than his own hours and wages sounded through the words of Andrey Krugloff. Hours and wages alone were not enough to lift his heavy face out of the mold of common clay. It was the knowledge that they were one with the great living, breathing human mass—the people—that filled their eyes with visions.

The honeymoon of Revolution was already waning on that day when the American commission came to Petrograd; but the consciousness of "the people" as an entity still remained. Slowly

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the years of political and economic slavery, land hunger, and hideous physical poverty imposed upon the many by the few had brought about a mass consciousness that was the most vital force in revolutionary Russia.

I discovered with surprise that the Tsar's name was seldom mentioned. He ceased to count for anything. A month after the first revolutionary attack, he was as completely forgotten as if he had never lived. When Vera and Ivan tore the double-headed eagles from the great wrought-iron fence around the Winter Palace, and ripped the imperial coat-of-arms from the buildings to make bonfires in the streets, all that there was of Nicholas, even his memory, was burned.

With the tragic failure of the first Revolution of 1905 and 1906, when the Workers tried to take control and lost everything, still fresh in their memory, they were trying desperately to coöperate, to give and take, to use the power of the intellectuals and at the same time direct revolution into the channels through which they wanted it to flow. They were theorists who had always been denied the right of action. Never having been allowed to try to put any of their theories

**Around the statue of Alexander III, symbol of old Russia, the talking multitudes
surged**

First Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies



Alexander Kerensky in the study of the Tzar

© Orrin A. Wrightman

The great stucco Winter Palace in which the American guests were housed



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into practice, they had never learned how to compromise. Each group was willing to die for its own particular definition of revolution, but no group was able to yield to the theory of another. Consequently, Cabinet crises followed Cabinet crises.

Prince Lvoff and the scholarly Miliukoff had already been retired to private life before the Root Commission reached Russia. Miliukoff, student of English institutions, saw freedom for Russia in the terms of a constitutional monarchy. To him, and to the liberals who gathered around him, this was a sufficiently radical step for a country that had only yesterday crawled out from under the iron boot of absolutism. He and his followers were a hopeless minority, and, in spite of their past struggles for Russian freedom, were soon discarded, with the monarchial idea. They were liberals and could not follow Russia into the new social realms she was so eager to explore.

The demand of the people for a republic was insistent. The republican idea satisfied some, but not enough. A social democracy—a socialist state—became the loudest cry of the articulate proletariat.

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I heard it on the street corners and in the crowded trams, along the wide paths of the parks, and in the assembly rooms of palaces whose ancient walls might well have shuddered at the strangeness of such sentiments.

Much of the time they talked of war, and I heard unkempt soldiers in dilapidated uniforms and workmen in shoddy suits demanding "an interbelligerent conference," "statement of Allied war aims," "publication of the secret treaties," as glibly as workingmen at home discuss hours and wages.

Here and there a group talked of the coming of the American Commission. Usually the spokesman was an unofficial diplomat returned from the United States and bringing his own decided idea of us and our faults. There were many of these in Petrograd in the days of early June. Some of them hailed from Hester Street; and Hester Street and New York's East Side became formidable factors in complicating the international situation. They had seen all of the worst and none of the best of America. They sat at the tables in the tea-room where the members of the Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers'

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Deputies gathered around the samovar, and told stories of poverty and suffering on the East Side.

"Root is coming to make you fight," they said. "Root does n't care anything about the Revolution. He's a capitalist, a corporation attorney, a hide-bound reactionary. In the United States he's against the workers."

Most of these men were honest revolutionists, soap-boxers, actuated by nothing more than hatred of the capitalistic system and a distrust of all things bearing a government stamp. There were other unofficial diplomats in Petrograd whose words had a different origin. They were under orders from Berlin, and their business was to discredit America and the Allies and make the Russian masses believe the German people were the true friends of Revolution. They conducted a telling and profitable propaganda. To begin with, they had linguistic and geographical advantages that the Allies could not overcome. Many Germans speak Russian, still more Russians speak German. Being next-door neighbors, the Germans understood the Russian psychology.

They knew that nothing in the world meant anything to the mass of the Russians but saving

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their Revolution, and they simulated a sympathy for revolution that they were temperamentally incapable of possessing. They pictured Germany as hungry for democratic peace, and the Allies as imperialists who would not stop fighting until they had crushed the German masses and divided the German territory. They accused the Allies of trying to continue the war for the purpose of destroying the Revolution. They took the passion and idealism of the Russian mass and tried to turn it to their own ends.

They also had something to say about the coming of the American Commission, and they said it where it would take effect.

For the most part, unofficial Russia was too engrossed in its own very important business to pay much attention to the tall, gray-haired, distinguished American who was coming to town. Unofficial Russia was concerned chiefly with defining revolution, and each individual group was possessed of a passionate necessity for making the other groups accept its definition.

All together, it was not a happy situation into which the imperial train was bringing the American diplomats that June afternoon. The train,

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looking almost as it did when the royal family last journeyed forth from Petrograd, slipped into view on the appointed second.

At ten o'clock next morning Ambassador Root sat in a corner of the huge drawing-room in his suite at the Winter Palace with his back to the light. Half a dozen of us foreign correspondents sat stiffly upon the edges of flower-brocaded chairs drawn in a circle around him, while he introduced the Washington Code into Petrograd.

The Washington Code is a Maxim silencer. It is a gentleman's agreement to which an occasional lady is reluctantly admitted. A great man sits in a corner—with his back to the light—and announces that he would like to be able to discuss quite openly everything that happens and even to have the benefit of your advice. Of course, if he is to do so, he must be assured that all he says will be held in strictest confidence. You—perhaps because you are flattered by the great man's confidence, perhaps because of your curiosity—joyfully consent. Sometimes you consent only because you know the folly of cutting off your ears merely because your lips are sealed.

The Washington Code was the only check to

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speech in all that great land swamped beneath a flood of words.

Those morning conferences became a regular institution. We did most of the talking while Mr. Root sat silently listening. Occasionally he made one of those simple, pat, nut-shell comments for which he has such an amazing talent, and we regretted the "made in America" rules for correspondents.

From time to time, special missions took flying trips out of Petrograd to study some particular phase of the complex situation. The military men went to the front; the naval representatives took in a mutiny of the Black Sea Fleet; the bankers investigated Russia's depleted treasury; and the religiously inclined went to Moscow to discover the future status of the Russian Church.

There was no official life of any kind. When the Commission donned its Prince Alberts and paid its first two formal visits, they found the Foreign Minister in a sack-suit and tan shoes and the members of the Council dressed like workingmen. The young men of the Provisional Government were growing old overnight with the burden of the task upon them. And the mem-

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bers of the Soviet were groping endlessly for that hidden road which idealism and reality may travel in equity.

Every man, from the young Minister President, Alexander Kerensky—whose health was already giving way under the frightful strain of trying to make the dilapidated economic machine inherited from the Tsar's régime supply the exhaustive demands of war and revolution—to the most insignificant little delegate in the Soviet, was working with his sleeves rolled up to remold Russia nearer to his heart's desire.

As the Soviet moved, so Russia moved. It was the mouth-piece of the awakened masses. Already it was the government behind the government. Charles Edward Russell was the only member of the Commission who was able to get the least bit close to the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies. They treated him with more courtesy than any other official foreign representative, though they looked upon him as a renegade socialist.

I went with him to the Soviet one day when he was to speak. His buttonhole flaunted the reddest red ribbon in Petrograd, and his white linen

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collar, the only one in the huge assembly, was encircled by a flaming scarlet tie. They listened to his message, but it had no meaning for them. He had come to Russia to help make Russia fight, and the dream of the Russian revolutionist was not only to stop Russia from fighting, but to put an end to all wars. Separate peace was no part of the revolutionary scheme. Even the most radical members of the Soviet were playing for larger stakes. Internationalism was at the bottom of their creed, and it was not until ten months after the fall of the Romanoffs that I heard a revolutionist admit the possibility of separate peace. It was at a meeting in the Duma, when Leon Trotzky, after the armistice negotiations at Brest-Litovsk, said:

“We have given the Allies a month to come into the peace negotiations. Perhaps we can give them a little more time if they need it, but we can’t go on forever. Russia is bleeding to death, and to save her we have to get back to the mills and the farms and the factories.”

They believed that the failure of internationalism in 1914 did not necessarily mean the failure of internationalism in 1917, for now the interna-

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tionalists of the world had before their eyes the example of Russia and the Russian Revolution. The revolutionists had no hope from the German autocracy, but they were confident that if they could but speak loud enough, the masses of the German people would rise and overthrow their government, as the Russian workers, soldiers, and peasants had done.

A few men believed, with the elder Liebknecht, that the German people could never be free until the German military power was defeated at arms, and these tried frantically to continue the war.

"Peace, but not separate peace," was the phrase on every Russian tongue.

The Root Commission realized this, and it realized also that the question was not whether the government had the will to go on fighting, but whether it had the power. The mission was interested in helping to give Russia that power. Perhaps what it failed to realize was that Russia's spiritual needs were as great or greater than her material needs. The thing above everything else that Russia needed to keep her in the war was a cause. Root, "battered old campaigner," as he styled himself, was not unmoved

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by the sincerity and immensity of the movement in which Russia was engrossed. It was not his day—it was the day of the diplomats from Hester Street. He might not agree with their judgments or approve their methods, but I think he felt himself in the presence of something big, something epochal.

For three years, Ivan had fought desperately in the trenches, simply because the Little Father had told him to. Sometimes it was for love of the Little Father that he fought. More often it was for fear of him and his generals. More often still it was only in response to that blind obedience to orders which absolutism instils in those whom it enslaves. Sometimes Ivan did not know until he reached the big city of Petrograd what enemy of Holy Russia it was that he must fight.

Manpower was cheap in Russia. Russia was correspondingly careless as to how she wasted it. Ivan fought as no other soldier in the world is asked to fight—fought with bare hands, fought with pitchforks, fought with guns that he took from the hands of comrades as they fell in battle.

One day Ivan discovered that the Tsar, in

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whom he had believed, was just a little man whom he was able quite easily to put aside. The general, the colonel, the captain of the regiment—they too were little men. He need not salute them; he need not respect them; he need not obey them.

The great driving force—fear—was gone. That greater driving force of war—a cause—Ivan had never known. No one had bothered to give him one. No one had cared enough.

Suddenly the facts were changed. The old gods were swept away in a single hour. Tsar and church and country crumbled together. Revolution took their place. Russia had a cause. "Save the Revolution!" became the rallying cry. To save the Revolution, and what it meant to each, became the common faith. However men differed in their definition of terms, they were all agreed as to the slogan. Russia would follow no other flag.

Ivan was tired of war—tired to death. Being Russian, he had no relish either for killing or for dying; but when the occasion demanded, he did both with a degree of resignation and despatch that is almost Oriental. Living always in the

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shadow of danger, he acquired an indifference to it as sublime as it is tragic. Essentially a fatalist, he accepted the facts of life as they came to him, and contented himself with thinking occasionally of that day of the people off there in the vague future when all would be different. He was n't interested in other men's territory. Constantinople had no meaning for him. He was not naturally imperialistic or militaristic. He wanted to govern himself and let other people govern themselves.

Freedom had come, and he wanted desperately to enjoy it, to use it to its limit and still to save it.

Diplomatically, Germany was in the strategic point. She pressed her advantage. She asked Ivan to do what he wanted to do—to stop fighting. The Allies asked Ivan to do what he did not want to do—to go on fighting.

The Root Commission made it plain that, underlying the whole question of aid to Russia, was the fundamental question of whether Russia was going to continue in the war.

The July offensive was the answer of Kerensky to the Allies. It was a blunder from its in-

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ception—a forced offensive for which Ivan was not psychologically prepared. He invested no part of his faith in it, and he chose to be shot as a coward and traitor rather than continue it. A few picked men went into battle and put up a brilliant and courageous fight; but the rank and file of the Russian soldiers were not behind them. Ivan could no longer be driven to battle by the whip of fear, and he had not yet come to know Germany as a greater enemy to himself than to the Tsar.

The Root Commission waited to see the offensive well started before it left Petrograd, but did not remain to see the tragic end.

CHAPTER III

IRRECONCILABLE BED-FELLOWS

WAR and revolution are irreconcilable bed-fellows. Mars is a jealous god, demanding more and ever more sacrifice. Revolution cries incessantly for larger freedom. Out in that nebulous land, beyond the edges of civilization, for which all nations have a common name—"the front"—I came close, very close, to the staggering reality of war. I came to know how revolution wars on war, and war on revolution, and both on freedom and democracy. Conflict is the characteristic element of revolution, as of war. Democracy languishes, and freedom sickens in the midst of conflict.

On that dismal gray day when I slipped quietly away from Petrograd, the capital was celebrating in a mild, half-hearted fashion the offensive on the southwestern front.

With me went Peter Bukowski, carrying in his pockets two of those most coveted of all docu-

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ments to the war-time correspondent—the pass that entitles the bearer to safe-conduct into that forbidden territory where visitors are discouraged at the point of the bayonet. Only slightly less important than the permits was Peter himself; for he was my voice, my ears, and my body-guard—though in this last capacity he proved entirely superfluous.

Polish grandparents bequeathed to Peter a foreign name and an aptitude for languages. Somebody—it must have been a fairy, for every one else disclaimed all responsibility—put a map of Ireland on his face. Two generations of Chicago, U. S. A., did the rest. The result was a typical American, one hundred and seventy pounds of bounding vitality, irrepressible good nature, and plain boy. Peter won the heart of every one from Johanna Ivanovna to the Division Chief, and paved my way from the lazaret to the trenches. Peter, upon the night of our departure, was torn with conflicting emotions. The American colony was going to honor the Fourth of July by consuming quantities of white-bread sandwiches from the Ambassador's pantry. Peter wanted desperately to see the Russian

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front. The vision of stacks of sandwiches—white-bread sandwiches—appeared before him, but Peter would not be there.

We went early to the station, in the hope of claiming two upper berths. There were no longer any sleeping-car reservations in Russia, but there was an unwritten law that the person who first put his belongings into the upper berth was entitled to sleep there, while the other occupants huddled together on the seat below or stood in the aisles. We poked inquiring heads into one compartment after another, but the earlier birds, to make assurance doubly sure, had thrown not only their baggage but their persons in the coveted places.

When I dozed off to sleep, a girl who had fled from Riga at the German advance was sitting beside me. I awoke an hour later, and she was gone. In her place was a round-faced, blue-eyed boy drawing shiny black cavalry boots over blue breeches with a golden stripe down each bulging side. He looked too young for war, but five red stripes on his sleeve proclaimed as many wounds.

All night long the stream of life flowed in and

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out. All night long a changing procession filed through the compartment. Men stayed for an hour or two, and dropped off at wayside stations. Some, just out of the hospital, were home on sick leave. Some were returning to their positions at the front. All were tired—tired to death; yet sleep was out of the question. Each man unfolded his own scrap of story, expressed his opinion about the war, and dropped out to make room for another.

The boy stayed longer than the others. Peter offered him a cigarette, and soon he was relating a round, unvarnished tale. Smirnoff Brusiloff was his name, and his age eighteen. He was in school at Petrograd when the war broke out, and he made up his mind to enlist. His father, a Russian general, promptly ordered him to stick to his books. He as promptly rejected parental commands and ran away to join the army. From his pocket he drew a handful of medals. They were the four Orders of St. George. Each of them marked some daredevil adventure and hairbreadth escape. The last, the Gold Cross, highest award in the gift of the Tsar, was given for blowing up a railroad bridge used by the

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Germans for transport of provisions and war supplies.

To him, war was a great game. The abstract ideas of revolution meant nothing. The theories that were keeping his peasant brothers in the trenches awake at night passed him by entirely. "There is no sport left in fighting with the Russian army," he said. "I am going to cut down south and try to break into the English lines."

He left—and toward morning there sat in his place a simple fellow with a strange look in his vacant eyes. He unwrapped a big hunk of black bread, and with a pocket-knife pared off scraps and ate them. When he had finished his breakfast, he nodded to sleep. The soldier beside him drew the wabbling head down to his shoulder, as he might have done to a tired child. "The war," he said, laying a gentle hand on the boy's hair—"he is not right here."

When I opened the door of the compartment in the morning, the aisle was filled with soldiers asleep on the floor. I picked my way over one human bundle after another to the platform, to negotiate the purchase of wild strawberries, bot-

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bles of fresh milk, and prim little round bouquets of wild flowers which the barefoot peasant children were offering for sale.

Late that afternoon we moved into the compartment of a kindly colonel, with whom Peter had made friends. We were all bound for the same section of the front, and the only other occupant of the compartment was Corporal Kuzma, of the proud age of fourteen. Already he had seen two and a half years of service, and had been twice wounded. He had a wonderful red pencil, which he fingered affectionately as he took us into his confidence. This pencil had been given him by a nurse in the hospital where he had been convalescing from his last injury.

The corporal's father, according to his story, was a captain of staff, and his mother a first-aid nurse. Both had been killed at the beginning of the war. An older brother, an officer in the army, had been killed in action; and a sister, seventeen years old, who was a nurse, was drowned while swimming the Niemen River to get away from the Germans. The corporal, lone survivor of his family, naturally joined the army. Two promotions were the reward for

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valor under fire. His uniform confirmed his story.

The corporal did not say that he was pressed for funds, but he offered to dispose of his treasured red pencil for a consideration. Peter bought it for a ruble, and presented it again. Then the Colonel bought it for a ruble, and he too followed the rest of Peter's example.

"But," added the Colonel, "if I ever hear of you selling it again, I will not only take it away, but I will have you dismissed from the army in disgrace."

I wanted to see more of this astounding child; but when we changed trains at the next station, he too dropped into the stream of the procession and disappeared.

The next part of the journey we made sitting upon a wooden bench in a fourth-class carriage. That night we picked up a sleeper again, and the Colonel insisted on stowing me away in the upper berth, with a tiny pillow that his daughter had made for him tucked under my head. He confided to Peter that I was the first American woman he had ever met.

"My father was in the army before me, and

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my grandfather before him," he said, with a sigh; "but I am going to send my boy to America to be educated for some other profession."

He understood the revolutionary soldier no more than young Brusiloff did. This lusty new thing that had come crashing into the ordered ways of his military life, and snapped its fingers in the face of all the traditions upon which his world was founded, left him hurt and helpless and bewildered. I fell asleep still listening to his voice. The next thing I knew, it was daylight, and he and Peter were hurrying me off the train.

Not a note of war jarred the quiet of this landscape. Nothing in the wooded slopes or in the deep meadows remotely suggested war. The Colonel sniffed the morning air. "It smells like the front," he said, with a sense of real satisfaction.

We parted. He was to continue on the main line for another station, while we shot off in a different direction. The rest of the journey we made squatting on the floor of a box-car. The only other passengers were two soldiers and a tiny pansy-faced girl of six with great gray eyes,

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shy and wistful. She sat upon the edge of my skirt, spread out for that purpose, and seriously crunched sunflower seeds.

Our way led through fields of rye, yellowing in the sunshine, and potato patches, green and promising. On the edge of the distant clearing a herd of cattle grazed, and along the road-bed women, barefooted and in calico dresses, worked with picks and wooden shovels. An army motor-truck, driven by a woman, chugged across our path.

At ten o'clock the branch line came to an end in a cleared space in the forest, and we stepped into a huge tent canteen with a Red Cross sign above the door. Soldiers, a hundred or more, slouched over the tables, slicing off hunks of black bread with their pocket-knives, and washing the bread down with tea drunk from tin cans. They were of the earth, these men. Their dun clothes were heavy with the brown mud of the trenches, their faces weathered to the color of the soil, their tawny hair sun-bleached. Only their eyes, sky-blue or shining black, lifted them out of the monotone.

One of them brought us tin cups of steaming

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tea, and explained that he and his comrades were just out of the first-line trenches. Peter asked him to direct us to the lazaret, which was to provide us with sleeping quarters. He pointed toward the forest, where a thin wisp of gray smoke curled slowly up into the blue sky, and volunteered to take us there. We started across the fields on foot. It was a crisp and clear morning. A recent rain had washed and polished every blade of grass. A little wind stirred gently the feathery tops of the distant pines, and rippled the field of blue corn-flowers, white buckwheat, yellow mustard, and purple clover-bloom.

Surely this could not be war—these painted fields, those dark, peaceful woods! The thought had barely registered, when a dull *boom! boom! boom!* came suddenly to my ears. Peter looked at the soldier and at me.

“It ’s war, all right,” he said.

Beyond the first row of trees we came abruptly upon a cluster of low frame buildings, log cabins, and brush-covered dugouts. From the top of a tiny log bungalow, with blue curtains at the windows, an American flag was flying. A frisking colt kicked up its heels on the edge of the clear-

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ing, and a flock of friendly geese came waddling to meet us.

We stopped in front of a large building, and a Sister of Mercy in the Russian Red Cross uniform opened the door. She led the way to the dining-room, and ordered coffee with warm milk from the lazaret's own dairy.

Suddenly we heard a whirr above our heads. The nurse ran to the door, excitedly motioning to me to follow. An aëroplane,—a German aëroplane—was outlined against the cloudless sky. A battery opened fire to the right of us, and another to the left. The shots came in quick succession, like the beating of a drum. A tiny cloud of smoke appeared in the wake of the flyer. Another broke just above him. A third and a fourth shell exploded below. The gunners had missed. The German sailed safely on his destructive way.

“You had better get inside,” said a Russian doctor, who joined the group. “There will be a shower of shrapnel fragments in a minute.”

“We have been rather expecting an aëroplane raid to-day,” he continued, lighting a cigarette. “Our fellows celebrated the victory on the other

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front yesterday by peppering the Germans with artillery fire, and we thought they might retaliate with bombs."

We spent the day exploring the hospital, built upon ground once occupied by the Germans, and from trees felled there in the forest and sawed on the premises with a primitive two-man-power Russian saw.

With the exception of one hospital captured from the Austrians, there was not a more complete plant along the entire length of the great front; and the flag flying over the tiny bungalow had a real significance—an American was responsible for that hospital.

Dr. Eugene Samuelevitch Hurd, the Russians called him, and, though he was already on his way to France to help his own countrymen, he had left a record that made me realize what one unofficial American can do in the matter of diplomacy. Peter and I in the days to follow had cause to be profoundly grateful; for on this sector of the front one needed only to be American to have all ways opened unto him.

At dinner we sat down to excellent Russian fare: *shchee* (sour cabbage soup), *kasha* (boiled

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buckwheat), stewed meat, potatoes, and bread at least three shades lighter than any we had seen in Petrograd.

After dinner, Johanna Ivanovna, head nurse for the military hospital next door, took me for a walk through the woods. Johanna Ivanovna was young, fresh, and softly, sadly pretty in her Sister's garb. She was lonesome out there on the edge of the forest. She spoke a little English, rusty from long disuse. She was the only person in all those fields and forests who understood even a stray word of my native language.

As we turned back toward the lazaret, a Russian rocket flashed into the western sky. It was followed by another, and another.

"A German scouting party had been sighted outside the barbed-wire entanglements," Johanna Ivanovna explained from long experience at the front. "The rockets are torches to help trace their movements."

I slept that night on a narrow army cot in a typical camp room, the only unfamiliar feature of which was a strange contraption like a knapsack hanging on the wall. It proved to be a gas-mask, and bore the warning: "Keep your gas-

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mask always with you—it will save your life.”

I put the mask back on its nail, and turned down the gray army blankets, to find white sheets. My clothes had not been off for two nights, and those sheets were alluring. My last recollection was the sound of the low grumble of artillery on the firing line to the west.

Division Staff Headquarters was our immediate objective next morning. A *breechka*, with one horse in the shafts and another to run alongside in the strange Russian fashion, was at the door of the lazaret when we finished our coffee. The road led over a hillside and through a typical Russian village: a cluster of wooden houses huddled together in the center of fields of grain and flax. They were pitiful little homes, weather-grayed, straw-thatched, and dilapidated. The main street was thronged with soldiers, who had come to buy picture post-cards, cigarettes, and candy from the meager store. Beyond the village we headed into the forest, bumping our way over a military corduroy road of rough logs laid together like the boards in a floor.

The wagon path bristled on both sides with barbed-wire entanglements, and the woods were

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honeycombed with trenches. They were timbered with logs, and the roofs were covered with moss and delicate wild flowers.

The sentries glanced curiously at me. Women, even Red Cross nurses, seldom penetrated this far into their domain. But they allowed me to pass unchallenged. We stopped in front of an old-fashioned farm-house with a passion-vine growing over the veranda, and a rustic summer-house built around an aged tree in the front yard.

The General's aide came out to meet us. He took us to the commanding officer, and we drank tea while plans and permits were being made and horses saddled. Once permission was granted to visit the Russian front the military host left nothing to be desired.

The General offered me his aide as a guide; and he, Lieutenant Gusaroff, mounted me on his beautiful black "Arabka." The pony and I covered eighteen miles through the dark forests that day, and before I left we were thoroughly familiar with that sector of the front. Every mile of the way was bounded by trenches running off into the depths of the woods. Here and there

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we passed a pine snapped in the middle as if it had been a match, and great cavities in the earth marked the havoc of enemy artillery fire.

We lunched with the Colonel and a group of young officers in a log-lined dugout, with flowers upon the table and an elaborate hanging lamp made from pine cones suspended above it. In one corner of the living-room was a tiny wire pen in which three baby chickens were being carefully reared.

Table conversation turned to the question of the offensive on the southwestern front. Most of the men were hopeful that it might once more mean active participation of all the Russian troops. Some were dubious. It was evident that none of them liked the new committee system of managing the army. It was hardly to be expected that they would, for it meant a complete overturn of all their training.

Many were sympathetic with the Revolution; a few were revolutionists: but most of them wanted revolution to behave according to their own well ordered plan and not according to the nature of revolution.

The quiet of the morning departed. The

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rumble of the guns seemed quite close now. When luncheon was over, we all mounted horses and rode off in the direction they called. We came to a halt on the shores of another and much larger lake, a great inland sea nearly fifteen miles long. The wind had lashed its surface into whitecaps, and waves came beating noisily against the barbed-wire entanglements that poked their heads formidably above the water.

Here we dismounted, and they led me to an observation station cleverly screened by trees. Young Gusaroff adjusted the glasses and turned them over to me; then—"Bvistra, Miss Beatty, bvistra!" he shouted.

I looked, and at the opposite side of the lake a great cloud of sand rose suddenly into the air. A section of a German trench blew up in a puff of smoke.

Stretched out before me, beyond that powerful lens, were the Russian and German trenches. Above the ground the barbed-wire entanglements zigzagged across the gray hillsides. Under the surface, facing each other with watchful eyes and ears and ready trigger-fingers, were two long lines of silent men.

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In the reserve trenches beyond were more men—thousands of them, talking, sleeping, playing cards, brewing tea, living their lives like so many ants—who were of the earth and knew no other world.

A flotilla of tiny armored water-craft guarded the Russian end of the lake, and between it and the little German lake-craft was a stretch of mined water, which either would hesitate to cross.

It was hard to realize, looking through those glasses at the clouds of dust now on the German side of the line, now on the Russian, that every time the slim young lieutenant called "Bvistra!" the reaper of battlefields was shouting a more final command to some one or more of the dwellers under the earth.

Back at staff headquarters again, we sat down at a table with military maps spread before us. Gusaroff was an engineer, and loved every line of the complicated maps.

"If we had had enough ammunition in 1915 you would not have to be fighting to-day," he said.

"Here"—pointing to a spot in Poland now in the possession of the Germans—"sixteen thousand of us went into battle in 1915, and only five

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hundred of us returned. The artillery retreated, not because it did not want to go on fighting—not because it was beaten—but because it had only two rounds of ammunition left.”

He moved his finger to another point on the map. “There is a hill here,” he said, “which our men charged forty-eight times. On the forty-ninth attack there were only four survivors out of three thousand, and they shot themselves rather than surrender to the Germans. Reserves arrived in time to rescue the situation, but too late to save the men.”

“Yes,” said another officer; “if we had had the ammunition in 1915, I would be back with Mother Moscow, practising law, and all this business would be over. What will happen now—I don’t know. It is very bad.

“War and revolution do not get on well together; yet we younger men realize that revolution had to come. Things could not go on as they were.”

CHAPTER IV

SPECKS ON THE HORIZON

WAR as Russia has known it, war as they know it on the western front, is a different thing from war as I saw it made in the dark forests in July. Yet war as it came to me in flashes was real and terrible enough to fix itself everlastingly.

One afternoon I sat in a bomb-proof observation station and looked through a tiny round hole across a narrow strip of sand-dunes to a tangle of barbed wire. No Man's Land lay like a bone between two hungry dogs. Less than two hundred feet away, beyond that last strand of vicious metal, were the Germans.

I sat there, trying to believe it—trying to realize that here, a few steps distant, so close that I could almost reach out my hands and touch them, were the fighting forces of the man who stands to most of the civilized world as the arch-enemy of liberty and peace.

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Suddenly my wandering mind stopped short. Two black specks appeared for a moment above that metal line. On the instant two rifles cracked—short, sharp, and final.

The specks were gone. I caught my breath. It could not be true! I had imagined it.

The officer beside me was speaking. I had not heard. I begged his pardon abstractedly, and he repeated:

“A couple of Germans put their heads over the trench—bad thing to do.”

When I returned to the Colonel's headquarters a few minutes later, I found him surrounded by soldiers beaming with pleasure and being beamed upon in return. The Colonel, a stocky little man, brisk and alert, introduced me to his men, and pointed to a section of barbed-wire entanglement that they had just brought in. It was not the crude Russian entanglement fashioned from crossed logs sawed from the forest, but the made-in-Germany kind with slender portable metal standards, easy to fold and easy to carry. Under cover of the darkness of the night before, they had brazenly helped themselves to this sample of German efficiency, and before the

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enemy awoke to the situation the successful raiders were chuckling happily in safety in their trenches.

When darkness came again, the scouting party once more ventured forth; and this time, after a short sharp fight, they came back bringing a German with a shattered hip—left by his comrades to die.

The prisoner, a lad of eighteen, was from Dresden, and he told me it was his first night in the front-line trenches. I saw him on a cot in the Siberian Hospital the next day. At the foot of his bed sat a Russian officer, plying him with questions and filling long sheets of foolscap with the answers. Occasionally the boy turned his head to the pillow and sobbed with pain and exhaustion. The nurse looked at him compassionately.

"Heaven knows, I don't like the Germans," she said, "but I can't help feeling sorry for that boy. He is suffering terribly."

A woman doctor stepped up to the officer.

"He can stand no more," she said.

I stooped to brush the flies from his feet and tuck the sheets around them. He looked up at

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me and managed a feeble and a grateful English "Thank you."

The next night a deserter was brought in. He was from Alsace. He told us that the Alsatians in the trenches were alternated with Germans ordered to watch them. In addition, a German officer continually patrolled the rear of the line. It was raining, and the officer was apparently less vigilant. The man watched his chance, and slipped away under cover of the storm.

Johanna Ivanovna, Peter, and I went frequently in the evenings to a near-by village where a young Cossack captain, Vasaili Pestrakoff, and a command of a hundred men operated an anti-aircraft battery. The Captain was a living denial of all my preconceived ideas of Cossacks. He was quiet and serious and almost puritanical in his denunciation of the moral code preached and practised by some of his brother officers.

One evening we found the regimental band drawn up outside the entrance to the village. It was St. John's Day, and the occupants of the straw-thatched huts were out in the brightest and best calico clothes their meager wardrobes permitted. All of the soldiers within walking dis-

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tance of the battery were there. When they saw us coming, the band proudly played an American march—"in honor of the Amerikanka," explained Johanna Ivanovna. A Russian waltz followed, then a lively peasant tune.

Russia has danced little since the war, but the music was a real temptation. A soldier grabbed a barefoot woman and whirled her into the circle. Another followed his example, then another, and another. The women danced with flying feet and tragic faces. Three years of living in constant apprehension, fleeing from home in terror and straggling back again to take up life within sound of enemy guns, had painted fear and resignation into their great, soft eyes. The children huddled together in a group on the edge of the ring, peeping shyly up at me from under their kerchiefs when curiosity got the better of timidity. The telephone had tinkled out the information that three enemy aëroplanes were headed that way, and while the crowd danced the Cossack Captain's observers searched the heavens with powerful glasses.

The band struck up the Russian Mazurka, and Captain Pestrakoff, at the urging of his soldiers,

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whirled me into the circle. One and another of the dancers dropped out and marked time on the side-lines. The Russian steps were as strange to my feet as the language was strange to my ears, but the music was irresistible. What relation there was between what we danced and the Russian Mazurka I do not know; but we danced and the crowd cheered. Suddenly the Captain became conscious that we were alone in the circle. He colored and abruptly stopped. Half a dozen men grabbed him up on their shoulders and tossed him in the air again and again. A dashing little soldier from the Ural Mountains caught me and whirled me through a succession of spirited steps to the end of the music.

As I left the crowd, another soldier saluted and slipped something into my hand with a shy *pash-alasta* (please). I looked down and found two tiny emblems, the crossed wings and propellers of the aviation corps, cleverly fashioned from the aluminum cap of a German shell.

The telephone tinkled the news that the enemy aëroplanes were avoiding the battery, and had passed far to the south. From the dance we went to the Captain's brown canvas *palatka* (tent),

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where a tiny brass samovar bubbled. There was candy from Moscow, an almost unheard-of luxury in those days, and wild blueberries gathered by the villagers and presented in gratitude for the security that the Captain was bringing. I noticed a *balalika* in one corner, and at our urging our host clicked off the favorite folk-songs of the Don Cossacks.

The following night we were again drinking tea in the little *palatka*. The hour was late. The sky was hung with clouds. A drizzle pattered on the canvas roof. It was the last possible time and place to expect an aërial caller. The Captain jumped suddenly from his chair.

"We have a visitor," he said.

"What?" asked Peter.

"There is an aëroplane in the vicinity," he said.

We listened, but our untrained ears distinguished nothing but the rain on the roof. We followed the Captain to the square. Deserted a moment before, it was now filling quickly with barefoot men in various stages of night-dress. The Captain ordered all lights in the village out, and sent the men—who were targets in their white night-clothes—back to dress. He gave

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the command to load the guns and stand ready.

In low tones the men speculated as to whether they were in for a bomb attack on the battery or a Zeppelin raid on the railway junction. By this time the purr of the motor was audible even to Peter and to me. Alternatives were discussed in whispers. The Captain might fire a random shot; but if it were a bomb attack, this would merely disclose the position of the battery. He waited and said nothing.

A deathly hush fell upon the square. For an interminable half-hour we listened to the humming of the motor, momentarily expecting a message from the bird-man and quite oblivious of the softly falling rain. Then gradually the sound diminished in volume, and finally ceased altogether. The *rat-tat-tat* of the machine-gun of the adjoining battery announced that the fate of the visitor had passed beyond the possible control of our Captain. We went back to the samovar and fresh glasses of tea.

Fair weather had departed. The crisp, clear days of blue and gold were gone. Rain came down in torrents, and dry boots and I became utter strangers. The first wet day I spent in the

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hospital. In the morning I slipped on a nurse's smock and went to the surgery.

It was not war out there in the moonlight. The tinkling telephones, the captured Austrian machine-gun, the cellar full of American ammunition,—even the whirring of the motors and the boom of the guns to the west,—could not make it seem real. But here in the surgery were shattered bones and tortured flesh, the agonized faces of patient men, and the terrible stench of gangrene. This was war.

The first anguished cry of "Gaspadin docteur" sent me to the operating-table. It was impossible to stay in that room and do nothing. I put my first-aid knowledge timidly to work, and before the morning was over two or three patients were calling me "Sestra" and taxing my meager knowledge of Russian and my intuition to its limit. Once the doctor beckoned me to look at a horrible mass of decayed flesh that had been a leg.

"Dum-dum bullet," he told me.

At luncheon Peter was in high spirits. War had taken hold of his imagination. He saw it as a great game.

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"You 'd better see the surgery," I suggested.

He refused, but he spent the afternoon with me in the hospital wards, to which we took a supply of cigarettes and matches.

All of Russia was gathered under that roof. There were Little Russians, merry-souled chaps, blue-eyed and fair-haired, who came from a land where the sun shines much and the earth yields plentifully. There were Veliko'rus, or Big Russians, inured to hardship, their sterner struggle with the soil photographed upon their determined faces. Scattered among them were fair-haired Cossacks from the Don and dark-skinned Cossacks from the Urals with a strain of Tartar marked in the slant of their eyes and the color of their skin. Sometimes it was an Esthonian who looked up from the pillow, a Pole, a Lett, a Lithuanian, or a member of one of the numerous Caucasian or Siberian tribes. There were three who stood above the others: Hamid Galli, Vasilli, and Ivan Markovitch.

Hamid Galli had a great joke on himself. All day long he lay on his back and laughed about it. He laughed with his eyes, black and shining like jet beads, and with his mouth, spread wide across

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a row of gleaming white teeth. He was a Cossack from the Urals, small, brown, and wiry. He and his pony from the Urals, wiry, dark, and spirited like the master himself, had been at the front for three years. Time after time they had both gone into that mad rush of man and horse and steel called a cavalry charge, and come out without a scratch. Three weeks before, the pony had climbed up on his hind legs and toppled his master off. For a Cossack to be thrown from any horse is either a swearing or a laughing matter. Hamid Galli swore, then he tried to pick himself up. To his amazement, he could not move. His leg was broken—broken by his own pony. To Hamid Galli that was a hundred-percent. joke. He began to laugh. He was still laughing when the stretcher-bearers carried him away. He laughed while the doctor was setting it. And the nurse told me that even in the night, when the ache of it kept him awake, he laughed quietly to himself.

Vasilli, who was in the next bed, smiled also; but Vasilli's smile was the feeble effort of bloodless lips and trusting blue eyes, deep sunken from long suffering. Vasilli's smile was the courage-

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ous effort of the spirit, and there was no mirth behind it. Vasilli's deathly white hand rested on the bandaged stump of a once serviceable young leg.

One day they wheeled him in to the operating-table, where the doctor was coming to dress his wounds. Vasilli had had one previous experience with operating-tables. A frightened look came into his eyes. He said nothing until the doctor left the room; then in a whisper to the nurse:

"Seestra, is he going to cut off my other leg?"

"No, no; he is going to dress your leg to make you feel more comfortable," she answered.

The feeble, patient smile crept into Vasilli's blue eyes.

"Is n't he good to me?" he said.

Ivan Markovitch, in the ward beyond, neither smiled nor laughed. Ivan lay on the pillow, his face ghastly gray and his breath coming in short, quick gasps. When Peter offered him cigarettes, he shook his head, and we had to stoop low over the bed to catch the faint words that came in whispers from his lips.

In the whole wide world Ivan could find no

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cause for laughing. He had tuberculosis; and the pity in the eyes of the sister, when she looked at him, confirmed my worst fears.

Ivan was twenty, and the only boy in a large family of girls. His people were peasant farmers, and until he was drafted for a soldier, he spent all his days in the fields, cultivating the hemp and flax and planting potatoes. The winter before in the trenches he took cold. His lungs began to pain, and he applied several times to be allowed to see the doctor.

"It was before the Revolution," he whispered. "They would n't listen to me. The officers told me to go back to my regiment where I belonged. Now look at me."

Peter said something intended to be cheering; but there was a note in the voice of the American boy of the bubbling spirits that I had not heard there before.

Two days later I met Ivan's nurse coming from the field with her arms full of white daisies.

We took them, wet with raindrops, and made a wreath and a long garland, and when we had finished we went to the crude little chapel on the edge of the wood.

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Leaning against the wall was a wooden cross, sawed that morning from a freshly cut pine. Inside, the light from a tiny altar lamp fell across a white pine coffin and upon the face of Ivan. We arranged the garland upon the coffin, and tied a bow of white gauze on the wreath. Then we stood back and looked silently a minute at the peasant boy from the distant country who had not lived to know either the joys or the limitations of freedom.

Two other nurses slipped through the door and stood beside us. Tears came into the eyes of one and another, and they gave me a strip of white gauze because I had forgotten my handkerchief.

It was a common language that we spoke—the only one we had in common.

Ivan was Ivan, to us: a peasant boy who died in the years of his strength and youth, alone and far from home. Ivan was all the boys of the world to each of us, and a special boy or two in some particular corner of the world.

I doubt if I could have danced that night, however tempting the music or importune the partner. Yet one must dance! The sun and the

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moon rise and the current of life flows on, heedless of tortured flesh, unmindful who lies dying.

For two days I stayed away from the trenches. The rain oozed through the cracks in the rough pine boards in my room and spread in puddles over the floor. It showed no signs of ceasing. One morning, regardless of Peter's protest, we set out to cover the three miles to the staff. A very much astonished young Russian met us at the door.

"How did you get here?" he asked.

I explained that we had come with much ease and some exhilaration on our own feet, and were none the worse for the walk.

"But surely you don't want to go to the trenches on a day like this! You will be up to your knees in mud. You can't imagine what it is like," he said.

"I have a very strong desire to find out at first hand," I answered.

He consulted two brother officers, who in turn consulted the telephone.

Finally they decided: "It is possible, but foolish."

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Still smiling, but frowning indulgently upon me, they put me in the General's big gray motor-car, and we started for the forest.

Twice the heavy car stuck in the mud, and Lieutenant Gustaroff told me to tell my government to send some American Fords parcels post.

Just as we reached headquarters the sun came slashing through the heavy clouds, and for three hours the downpour ceased.

The officers were waiting for us, curious to see these strange Americans who did n't stay indoors when it rained. We made our way through sandy trench roads, untimbered ditches bordered with shaggy lavender poppies, green oats, and blue cornflowers clinging close to their sloping sides. Then we went into the trenches. There were miles and miles of them, zigzagging back and forth like the Greek border on a guest towel. At intervals big metal plates were placed near the top, flanked on each side by sand-bags. Through the observation holes I peeped out on No Man's Land with the barbed-wire entanglements of the Germans beyond. Once they told me we were within a hundred and sixty feet of the enemy's first-line trench.

Bessie Beatty in the "dark forests at the front"

Lake Narach—a part of No Man's Land

4

A soldiers' shrine behind the lines

Captured barbed wire entanglement—Peter at the left



Blessing of the banners of the Battalion of Death

The Woman's Regiment on review before its departure for the trenches

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Our friends at the staff had not exaggerated the mud. The first time we came to a puddle, one of the officers lifted me up in his arms and carried me over. I protested that I was prepared for mud and did not mind it. Not understanding, he paid no attention. While I continued to protest, he carried me across three other puddles. Soon puddles disappeared—the trench became a continuous river of red mud. I escaped, and plunged in up to the top of my high boots.

Twice we lost our way in communication-trenches and had to retrace our steps. Intermittent artillery fire punctuated the journey, and an officer who spoke a little English taught me to distinguish between “Baba-yaga” and the “flutes,” the “trunks” and the “suit-cases.”

The big twelve-inch shells that carried wholesale destruction to the soldier and his carefully built trenches were named after the evil old Russian witch. The two-inch shell, whizzing through the air with a shrill whistle, was the flute. The nine- and ten-inch shells were trunks and suit-cases.

At one point we discovered that a “suit-case”

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had preceded us and caved in the timbers. Once, when the lay of the land permitted, I was allowed to put my head over the trench to see the remains of a Russian village. All that was left were the skeletons of two Russian brick stoves and their chimneys.

Electric light and kindred comforts such as they have in the enemy trenches were utterly lacking here. Mud! Mud! Here was nothing but mud! In one small trench-house—a burrow in the ground in the back-wall of the trench—three soldiers were playing cards; another was washing his shirt. Here and there we found men polishing their guns, and others brewing tea in aluminum pails over tiny fires. More of them were snatching a little sleep in order to be vigilant for the night.

Though none of them saluted the officers, there seemed little to indicate disorganization here; but the commanding Colonel told me that some of his men had deserted, and more were sick. Scurvy was making frightful inroads in the Russian ranks on every front, and to the north, in the vicinity of Riga, the men were in a pathetic condition as a result of poor food.

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The dirt, the flies, the vermin, the monotonous round, the endless soup and *kasha*, the waiting—these are the things that take the last ounce of a man's courage and faith. The Russian, like the Frenchman, the Englishman, and the Belgian, had had three years of it. The others knew for what they fought. Each had a cause; each had a country standing behind him and trying to send some fragment of comfort into his meager life. The Russian went to the front and stayed there simply because he was told to. It was tragic that he should be leaving his trenches, but it was understandable.

The danger of warfare made little impression on me that afternoon, but I came out knowing that men who have stood three years of trench life, whether they be English, French, Italian, Russian, or any other, can not be dismissed as "cowards" by those who stay at home. An hour later eight of us were gathered at dinner in the officers' mess. The Colonel had just asked for a second helping. Suddenly, as one man, we dropped our forks and listened. *Boom! Boom! Boom!* The big guns crashed in our ears. *Baba-yaga*, the flutes, the trunks, the suit-cases

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—all of them at once. The sounds of the afternoon were like silence in comparison. Two men rose and hurried away. The Colonel left his plate untouched.

One of the officers hurried back and said something in Russian to his commanding officer. He turned to me.

“You got out just in time,” he said. “They are bombarding the trenches—down where you were.”

And this was war! I had seen the trenches—walked safely through them with men whose chief concern was that I, a woman, should not get my feet wet. Hardly an hour later, the guns of the enemy were crashing them to pieces.

Always the German was there, waiting, playing the diabolical game of war just as effectively in the silence as when the guns were pounding death into the trenches. Sometimes it was a newspaper printed in Russian that found its way down from Berlin and into the Russian trenches; sometimes it was a proclamation signed by German soldiers. The newspaper contained accounts of British and French defeats and Ger-

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man victories, with profuse proffers of aid sprinkled through its news item.

"You are finished, Russia, but we will try to help you," one of them read. "It will be good for you and good for us to make a separate peace. We are not your enemies. We do not want to spoil your Revolution. We want to help you save it."

One afternoon, while a crowd of us were sitting at tea in the officers' dug-out not far from the front-line trenches, a soldier appeared at the door and called the commanding Colonel out. When the Colonel returned he had a sheet of yellowish paper covered on both sides with neat Russian script. A scouting party outside the barbed-wire entanglement had suddenly come upon a group of Germans hiding in a hole in the sand. The Russians expected to be fired upon, but instead the Germans ran up a white flag and motioned them to come forward.

"This," said the Colonel, "is what they gave them."

It was a German proclamation, compiled with thorough knowledge of the psychology of the

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Russian soldier. The Colonel read it aloud, pausing between sentences to permit Peter to translate.

"Russian soldiers!" [he began]. "The chief commander of the Western Army tells you that the army of the southwest front has broken our lines and achieved a great victory, and that we are defeated. This victory is called the beginning of a fight upon the outcome of which depends the freedom of the Russian people. Asking you not to be traitors, he tells you that you must defend the freedom, the fortune, and the honor of the Russian nation.

"All this is not true. Our lines were not broken. They are very strong, and the divisions were forced to retreat with losses greater than ever before.

"It is known that the Russian soldier is always ready to shed his blood, but it is also known that your commanders shed your blood for causes that are not worth it—for ideals that can never compensate for loss of life on the field of battle.

"We presume that you have not forgotten the place of the people's sacrifice! The order of the commander of the western front is interesting because it does not correspond with what is printed in your papers.

"Have you forgotten what was said on the day of the Holy Easter? That represented the holy ideal of the Russian Revolution. It seems that peace, a general honorable peace, without war and indemnities, is the ideal of the Russian people and was the cause of the fall of Nicholas. This advance, these horrors, seem the only result of the sacrifice of those who sleep in the brothers' sepulcher.

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"Do you hear the cry of the suffering workmen? Do you hear the cry of the blood of the soldiers? Does this appear to be your wish for peace?"

"Has the blood of the Revolution been spilt for nothing? The sacrifice of blood was little to what will now be spilt."

"Freed from the old régime, you have fallen into the hands of the English, French, and Americans. Remember, we welcomed your freedom, did not interfere with your internal affairs, and offered you a brother's hand. We offered you peace and asked you to send representatives from your government to talk over peace. Swindled and bought by English gold, you refused to believe us, but in numberless instances your brothers have proved the historical fact: We are not your enemies. We do not wish you to perish, or your freedom."

"Those who fear separate peace furnish you with money and all kinds of material, and all this is a proof of your unbelief in us, which will bring you to your ruin. We stand firm and quiet, and await your advance. The advance of English and French has been defeated, and we will also defeat you."

"THE GERMAN SOLDIERS."

"How shall you answer it?" I asked, when the Colonel had finished.

A lieutenant from Moscow, whom we had christened *enfant terrible* because of his bounding spirits and irrepressible pranks, raised his arms to imitate an aimed gun.

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"Boom! Boom! Boom! we shall answer them," he said.

But it was not so easily done as said. Those verbal gas-bombs, falling upon the simple, trusting mind of the Russian soldier, worked more havoc than heavy artillery and hand-grenade.

"My men are behaving pretty well, but I would n't dare order an offensive," one of the generals told me, just before I left the front.

The hereditary distrust between the officer class and the private was growing continually. Old and ancient grievances were unforgotten, and, as always, many of the innocent paid the price of the guilty. There were all kinds of Russian officers, just as there were all kinds of common soldiers. The soldiers were sometimes indiscriminating, even as the officers in their day of absolutism had been indiscriminating.

The memory of punitive expeditions that followed the Revolution of 1905, when thousands upon thousands of revolutionists were shot and sometimes brutally tortured by order of Russian officers without even the pretense of a trial, still lingered. The soldiers generally looked upon their officers as the natural enemies of revolution,

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and regarded orders with suspicion. Tragedy followed tragedy on the Russian front, and enemy treachery and pitiful misunderstanding on all sides were chiefly to blame.

Militarism was a product of autocracy, and the Russian front, at terrible cost, demonstrated that the larger freedom and the militaristic ideal can not live in the same world. The Russian revolutionist knew this. He knew in the summer of 1917 that freedoms, large or small, were not safe, in Russia or elsewhere, as long as one militaristic power lived to menace the others. He knew that the sword of militarism must be broken beneath the feet of the peace-hungry multitudes of the world before even the most limited of the freedoms are safe.

What the Russian did not know was that his brothers in Germany are themselves enslaved to the military ideal, and that the only way to win freedom is to defeat them and the power that keeps them in bondage. He did not realize that the only way to give constructive Germany back to the world is to destroy destructive Germany.

CHAPTER V

THE BATTALION OF DEATH

News—even bad news—travels slowly in Russia.

When Sidor Petroff pushed open the door of Bachkarova's forlorn little meat-shop one frosty March morning in 1915, Bachkaroff had already been dead three months.

Marie Bachkarova was slicing off a hunk of sausage for the boy Vashka, whose father was killed in the first clash of Russian flesh and German arms. She looked up and saw Petroff standing there, leaning on his crutches.

Something colder than the chill wind from the snow-covered street crept into the heart of Marie Bachkarova. The knife fell from her hand and clattered heavily to the meat-block. Her gray eyes opened wide in one flash of horror. They closed and opened again, dull and dumb with misery.

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The boy Vashka, who had seen news come to the village before on crutches, slipped quietly out of the shop without his sausage.

When Sidor Petroff hobbled away a few minutes later to show his old friends the Cross of St. George glistening on his trench-grimed soldier blouse, he was unaware that Destiny had walked a bit of the way with him that morning.

Destiny, marshaling her forces for a campaign against another group of ancient fetishes and cherished ideals, had allotted him a small but significant part in her project. Destiny, out in that desolate village of weather-grayed log houses, was preparing a shock that would be felt beyond the birch-wood forests and the Siberian steppes.

Destiny was preparing the most amazing single phenomenon of the war—the *woman soldier*. Not the isolated individual woman who has buckled on a sword and shouldered a gun through the pages of history, but the woman soldier banded and fighting en masse—machine-gun companies of her, battalions of her, scouting parties of her, whole regiments of her.

From the anti-suffragist Destiny was going to take forever his ancient and overworked formula:

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"Women can not bear arms! Therefore they should not vote."

From the feminist she was about to take her most triumphant retort: "Women don't need to bear arms—they bear soldiers."

Against the fervid faith of the Pacifist—that "women, who pay such a terrible price to give life will never be able to take it away"—she was preparing to drive her saddest and bitterest blow.

Destiny, in short, was about to bring confusion upon the tidy pigeonholes in which we keep our firm convictions ready for all emergencies.

Marie Bachkarova, the crude, illiterate peasant woman whom Destiny had chosen for the big part, was as ignorant as Sidor Petroff of the importance of the moment.

She could barely write; but that night laboriously she penned a letter.

The desolation of her life must have crept into her crude appeal. Somebody answered with permission to join a regiment of men forming in the vicinity of Tomsk.

From that day, Marie Bachkarova became simply "Bachkarova."

Her woman's name and her long brown braids

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went first. She changed her trailing skirt with the ruffle on the bottom for soldier's breeches tucked into the tops of high black boots. A vizored cap daringly replaced her folded kerchief, and the transformation was complete.

The strength and breadth, and the deep, full-toned voice of a man, were hers. Passing her on the street, you had to look three times to make sure she was not a man. After the first few days of grumbling protest, her comrades seldom remembered she was a woman.

In the two years that followed, Bachkarova was three times wounded, still Destiny kept her deeper purposes concealed.

One spring day in 1917, when Bachkarova was lying on a cot in a military hospital, a shrapnel bullet-hole as big as a man's fist in her back, some one brought news of desertions in the army.

"The men won't fight," said the Red Cross nurse, laying fresh gauze upon the wound. "They are a pack of cowards. They are drunk with freedom."

It was not altogether the truth: for every deed of ignorance and cowardice, the Russian front has registered one of heroism. But Destiny does

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not stop for anything so complex as absolute truth. She lingered at Bachkarova's bedside that afternoon long enough to do her work.

"The men won't fight," said Bachkarova to herself. "The men won't fight!" she repeated. Then, suddenly forgetful of the hole in her back, she raised herself quickly from the pillow.

"Women—women will fight!" she said.

Exhausted, she fell back on her pillow. She had her big idea. It was the idea that produced one of the most pathetic and most dramatic facts of the Russian summer of 1917.

On an afternoon in early June, two years and three months from the day that Sidor Petroff hobbled on crutches into the meat-shop to tell Marie Bachkarova that her husband was dead, Bachkarova, illiterate peasant woman from an obscure Siberian village, knelt in the great square in front of St. Isaac's Cathedral in Petrograd, while the priests sprinkled holy water, and thousands of necks craned for a glimpse of her. On that day she became a full-fledged officer of the Russian Army—the first woman officer in the world.

Her command, two hundred and fifty young

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soldier women, stood at attention while three generals of high rank buckled on her sword, and, after their fashion with brother officers, kissed her on both cheeks.

Into the keeping of Orlova they gave a proud gold-and-white banner. It was a gift from Kerensky, and from its standards fluttered the colors of the Battalion of Death. On each girl's sleeve were the same distinguishing marks—red "for the Revolution that must not die," and black "for a death that is preferable to dishonor for Russia."

Everything in Russia begins with a proclamation. The women soldiers fired three verbal volleys before they even saw their first round of ammunition. The first was an appeal to Russian women.

"Come with us in the name of your fallen heroes," they said. "Come with us to dry the tears and heal the wounds of Russia. Protect her with your lives."

To the soldier they said:

"Our hearts are about to give up their last hope. We weak women are turning into very tigresses to protect our children from a shameful

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yoke—to protect the freedom of our country. Woe unto you when we shall look upon you with contempt!”

To the deserters they said:

“Wake up and see clear, you who are selling the bread of your children to the Germans. Soon, very soon, you will prefer to face ten German bayonets to one tigress. We pour out our maledictions upon you. Enough of words! It is time to take to arms. Only with a storm of fire will we sweep the enemy off Russian soil. Only with bayonets will we obtain a permanent peace. Forward against the enemy! We go to die with you!”

Equipped as infantry, fully armed, rolled blanket-coats swung across their shoulders, the first woman's regiment in the world left Petrograd.

At their head was Bachkarova, the peasant. Beside her marched Marya Skridlova, the aristocrat, aide-de-camp, tall and patrician, daughter of a famous Russian admiral and Minister of Marine.

Bearing the banner of white and gold came Orlova, big and strong, head erect, and deep,

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serious gray eyes looking straight ahead at a vision in which the cheering multitudes in the streets of Petrograd played no part. Orlova's eyes were fixed on death. She wanted to die for Holy Russia. She had her wish. Three weeks later she carried her colors into battle, and fell before the first shell that broke across the German line.

Destiny permitted that for the better part of a week I might share the wooden boards and soup and *kasha* of these soldier women.

Late on a dreary, rainy night, I dropped off a troop-train at the military station of Malodetchna, and prepared to wait for dawn to show me the way to the headquarters of the Women's Battalion. I had that day plowed through miles of trenches, with the red mud oozing over my shoe-tops, and I was taking into barracks with me some recently acquired and very definite impressions of the horrors of war.

Many times in the days that followed, as I came to terms of friendship with one and another of these soldier girls, I thought of the line of barbed wire bounding No Man's Land, and of the German steel waiting behind to sink itself

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into the soft, warm flesh of my companions.

More often still, I shuddered at the idea that these girls with big eyes and clear open hearts were going out to kill; for I was among those whose pigeonholes held a fond faith in the coming of the day when women would bear neither arms nor soldiers, but a race of human beings gifted with the fine art of living together in peace and amity.

Here were women—two hundred and fifty of them—on their way to battle, and just a fraction of the women's army soon to be.

Destiny, dawn, and an occasional inquiry led me at six o'clock in the morning to their door. They were housed in two pine-board sheds, sandwiched between a dug-out full of Austrian prisoners and the barracks of a battalion of Cossack cavalry.

I found myself in a building a hundred or more feet long, with steep roofs sloping to the floor, and just enough width to allow for two shelves eight feet deep and an aisle between. The shelves at the moment were covered with brown bundles, and as I followed the sentry a hundred close-cropped heads emerged from them.

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Above my head, hanging from the rafters, was a jungle of gas-masks and wet laundry, boots, water-bottles, and kit-bags. Beside each girl lay her rifle. At the far end of the barracks we stopped before one of the brown bundles, and the sentry announced, "Gaspadin Nachalnik." The man's head and man's shoulders of Bachkarova arose from the blanket. Next to her, another bundle stirred, and Marya Skridlova, aide-de-camp, moved over and invited me to come up.

In that spot, between the social poles of Russia, Rheta Childe Dorr and I spent all the nights and most of the days in the week that followed.

Without delay I changed my too feminine dress for "overettes," and established myself as unobtrusively as possible in the life of the barracks.

Soon the brown bundles were all up and shedding unbleached muslin pajamas for their soldier uniforms. Once dressed, they tumbled out into the rain, and lined up with their brother soldiers from the other barracks to fill their pails with hot water from the common kitchen.

We ate our breakfast sitting on the edge of a bunk, slicing off hunks of black bread, and wash-

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ing it down with tea from tin cups. Bachkarova sat next to me, eating sardines from a can and wiping her greasy fingers on the front of her blouse. Orlova spent most of her time washing these blouses, in a vain attempt to keep the Commander clean.

The routine of the day began with the reading of the army regulations. The women soldiers had chosen to submit to the stern discipline of the Russian army in the days before the Revolution. The ceaseless rain made drilling in the field impossible, but within the narrow limits of the barracks they marched back and forth, counting "Ras, dva, tri, chetiri; ras, dva, tri, chetiri," for several hours a day.

Very soon one soldier girl after another detached herself from the mass and became to me an individual—a warm, personal human being. Bit by bit I gathered their stories. Little by little I discovered some of the forces that had pushed them out of their individual ruts into the mad maelstrom of war.

There were stenographers and dressmakers among them, servants and factory hands, university students and peasants, and a few who in

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the days before the war had been merely parasites. Several were Red Cross nurses, and one, the oldest member of the regiment, a woman of forty-eight whose closely cropped hair was turning gray, had exchanged a lucrative medical practice for a soldier's uniform.

Many had joined the regiment because they sincerely believed that the honor and even the existence of Russia were at stake, and nothing but a great human sacrifice could save her. Some, like Bachkarova, in the days of the Siberian village had simply come to the point where anything was better than the dreary drudgery and the drearier waiting of life as they lived it.

Personal sorrow had driven some of them out of their homes and on to the battle-line. One girl, a Japanese, said tragically, when I asked her reason for joining: "My reasons are so many that I would rather not tell them."

There was a Cossack girl from the Ural Mountains, fifteen years old, with soft, brown, questioning eyes, and deep, rich color tinting her dark cheeks. Her father and two brothers had been killed early in the war. Soon after, her mother, who was a nurse, had died from the effects of a

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German bomb thrown upon the hospital where she was working. The girl was absolutely alone in the world.

"What else is left for me?" she asked, with a pathetic droop to her strong young shoulders.

Two girls, Red Cross nurses, who had already been decorated four or five times for service to their country, said they had seen too many brave men suffer and die for Russia to be willing to see her sacrificed now on the Kaiser's altar.

There was a lonesome little girl, named Leana, whose big brown eyes, wide and questioning, will always come back to me when I think of women and war. She was a Pole, and had fled from Warsaw before the advancing Germans. She was sixteen years old, and far more hungry for love than for killing. She had the ways of a child, and, though we had no common language but that of the heart, we became fast friends. She used to slip her arm around me, and we would walk up and down the barracks, never speaking, but understanding quite as well as if we had many words. Sometimes, when I looked at her and realized that all her potentialities

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would be wasted out there on the battlefield, my eyes filled with tears.

They had come for many reasons, these women soldiers, but all of them were walking out to meet death with grim confidence that it awaited them there in the dark forests a few miles distant.

If there seemed to be any fear of them forgetting it,—if girlish spirits ran too high in the barracks,—Bachkarova quickly recalled it.

“You may all be dead in three days,” she would say. And soon afterward the Volga boat-song or the rollicking peasant tune they were singing would change to a deep, melancholy mass, with all the tragedy of the moment and of millions of other moments packed into it.

In a cord around each girl’s neck was a collection of sacred medals, and a tiny cloth pouch whose contents I speculated upon.

“What will you do if you are made prisoner?” I asked Skridlova one day.

“No one of us will ever be taken alive,” she answered, and pulled out the little gray pouch. “It is the strongest and surest kind there is,” she said.

Orlova seldom spoke. From morning till

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night she went about the barracks, doing something for some one. I had no soldier coat to wrap about me at night, and Orlova spread a couple of tents over the hard boards. When the black bread came from the commissary, Orlova saw to it that we had our soldier ration—two pounds and a half a day, more than any of us could eat; and just at the moment when I was most nearly petrified with cold, she was sure to appear with a pail of hot tea. At noon and at night, when two ragged little children from a near-by village came to beg the “leavings,” Orlova always managed to have an extra lump of sugar for each of them.

She was born for service, for mothering, for doing; but her solemn face, almost grim in its crude strength, remained fixed on her vision of death, and her thoughts were all for Holy Russia.

Nina was the comedy member of the Battalion. She would have been an invaluable find for the “movies.” She was so big that she had to put gussets in her soldier blouse to make it fit around the hips. She had a wide mouth, an upturned nose, and blue eyes, alternately full of fun and tears. She kept the Battalion laughing all of

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the time that it was not busy putting comforting arms around her and drying her tears.

A bundle of strange incongruities was Nina—utterly unfathomable to an American. Ever since the war began she had been jeopardizing her ample neck in the service of her country. The bars of an Austrian prison held her in check for six months, and she was considered such an important catch that her captors demanded no less a person than a famous Austrian general when terms of exchange of prisoners were discussed.

She spoke a very little English, much French, and a smattering of half a dozen other languages. One day I looked up and found her kissing her rifle ecstatically. She caught the bewilderment in my eyes.

“I love my gun,” she said almost defensively.

“But why?” I asked, trying to inquire into that strange back-country of her mind and emotions.

“Because it carries death. I love my bayonet, too. I love all arms. I love all things that carry death to the enemies of my country.”

One night I sat on the edge of the bunk, brush-

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ing my hair. She put her hand out and touched it. Then she felt her own close-cropped head.

"Do you like short hair?" I asked her.

"For a woman, no. For a soldier, yes," she answered.

It was a key-note. Nina spoke for the Battalion. Soldiers and women were, for them, things apart. When they cut off their long braids and soft curls, and pledged themselves to fight and die for their country, they put aside all the superficial femininities.

Powder-puffs and cosmetics had remained at home. Just once I saw a tiny mirror emerge from a kit-bag long enough to permit its owner to examine critically a small red spot on the end of her nose.

But the essential womanliness in them cropped out in a thousand ways.

Day and night the rain pounded upon the low roof, and all that week our feet and boots were soaked beyond all drying. It was bitterly cold in the barracks, and the odors of cheese and sausage purchased at the soldiers' store mingled with the smell of wet clothes and greased boots.

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Marya Skridlova acquired a severe cough, and her cheeks were flushed with fever.

"I am afraid I will never make a soldier," she said one day, with a wry little smile; "I am too demoiselle."

I recalled the first time I saw her. It was in the barracks at Petrograd, the day she joined the regiment. She still wore her Red Cross nurse's uniform, and the lovely oval of her face was framed with braids of soft brown hair. She was twenty-five years old, spoke five languages, was pretty, accomplished, and popular. Apparently she had everything to live for, but she was quite certain that her hours on earth were numbered, and briefly. Every girl in the barracks was devoted to her, and they were continually coaxing her to eat just another spoonful of the soup and *kasha*, which she loathed.

"Why did you come?" I asked her.

"Because I felt I had to," she answered. "What else is there for us to do? The soul of the army is sick, and we must heal it. I have come, and I shall stay until they give me a cross—a metal one or a wooden one," she added.

Every night Bachkarova announced that to-

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morrow they would leave for the trenches, and every night the announcement brought a cheer. In the morning they packed their kit-bags and rolled up their blanket-coats; at night they were still in the same place.

Always there was something lacking. First it was the boots. The army shoemaker was not used to providing for such small feet, and the commissariat was sorely taxed. When the boots arrived, the medical supplies were missing. When the big metal soup kitchen on wheels had come, there were no horses to pull it. A week went by, but gradually the entire camp equipment was collected.

Late one Sunday afternoon Bachkarova and Skridlova were summoned to staff headquarters. When they returned, they brought the news for which every girl in the barracks was longing. The Battalion was ordered to march at three o'clock next morning.

Neither the hardness of the plank beds nor the cold kept any one awake that night. There was far too much excitement to think of sleep. Gas-masks and wet laundry, water-bottles and

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boots, trench shovels and kit-bags, came down from the rafters in one mad scramble.

Before the dawn had come everything was in place, and they trudged away through the rain and mud of Malodetchana, singing a Cossack marching song to lighten their packs and their spirits.

All the world knows how they went into battle shouting a challenge to the deserting Russian troops. All the world knows that six of them stayed behind in the forest, with wooden crosses to mark their soldier graves. Ten were decorated for bravery in action with the Order of St. George, and twenty others received medals. Twenty-one were seriously wounded, and many more than that received contusions. Only fifty remained to take their places with the men in the trenches when the battle was over.

The battle lasted for two days. Among the pines and the birches of the dusky forests they fought. With forty loyal men soldiers, they became separated from the main body of the troops, and took four rows of trenches before they were obliged to retreat for lack of reinforcements.

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I heard the story from the lips of twenty of the wounded women. No one of them can tell exactly what happened.

"We were carried away in the madness of the moment," one of them said. "It was all so strange and exciting, we had no time to think about being afraid."

"No," said Marya Skridlova; "I was not afraid. None of us were afraid. We expected to die, so we had nothing to fear."

Then the demoiselle came to the surface again. "It was hard, though. I have a cousin—he is Russian in his heart, but his father is a German citizen. He was drafted: he had to go. When I saw the Germans, I thought of him. Suppose I should kill him? Yes, it is hard for a woman to fight."

Marya Skridlova got her Cross of St. George, and she came back to Petrograd walking with a limp as a result of shell shock.

"There were wounded Germans in a hut," she said. "We were ordered to take them prisoners. They refused to be taken. We had to throw hand-grenades in and destroy them. No; war is not easy for a woman."

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I asked about Leana.

"She was one of the six to stay behind," Marya Skridlova answered. "She was wounded in sixteen places, and died in the hospital after hours of frightful suffering."

On a stool beside a hospital cot in which one of the wounded girls lay was a German helmet. She pointed to it with pride.

"He was wounded," she said. "He was sort of half kneeling, and I hit him over the head with the butt of my rifle and took the helmet away."

For a moment I could not speak. Then, reaching for a straw to save my tottering world, I said: "He was still shooting, of course?"

"No, no. He was wounded."

She had blue eyes, soft, kind blue eyes, and lips that curled up at the corners. She was twenty-five years old, and had been a village dressmaker before she became a soldier.

"But Russian women are different," they say—they who have all their cubby-holes still in order.

But they are not. I have talked with them, slept with them, played with them, danced with them, wept with them. They are like women—

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like humans—everywhere. A little more melancholy, perhaps, but in all their potentialities essentially the same. Destiny has done her work well.

There were nearly five thousand women soldiers in Russia at the beginning of the fall of 1917. All over the country—in Moscow, in Kieff, in Odessa—they were learning to load, aim, and fire.

Bachkarova's little band in its first mad charge was but the advance-guard. The making of women soldiers became a business. People no longer followed the uniformed woman about the streets of Petrograd. They became a matter of course.

In Moscow I saw a thousand of them, representing all spheres of life from the peasant to the princess. In the officers' school, twenty girls were being trained to take their command. They were sleeping on boards, and getting used to soup and *kasha*, and all believed their day in the trenches was close at hand.

Soon after the fall of Riga, Bachkarova left the hospital in Petrograd, where she had been slowly recovering, and went to Moscow to lead

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Lining up for soup and kasha

© Orrin B. Wightman

Women soldiers at rest between drills

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**The crowd hugs the Nevsky to get out of range of the machine-guns in the July
riots**

The Cossacks bury their dead

1

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a fresh battalion of girls to the defense of the new front.

Out on the Finland road, not far from Petrograd, eleven hundred of them, after a stiff course in training in barracks, had a month of camp life to harden them for service in the trenches. These girls were to see their only fighting in the defense of the Winter Palace in the Bolshevik Revolution, and none was killed.

When the Cossack troops of General Korniloff prepared to march on Petrograd, the Provisional Government took stock of the forces at its command.

Prince Kudasheff, who had been drilling the women soldiers, reported there was not a better disciplined or more thoroughly prepared unit in the Russian army.

Bachkarova's adventurous battalion took no thought of age or physical condition; but these later soldiers submitted to a rigid examination, conformed to all of the requirements of the men of the army, and were asked to adhere to a rigid moral code.

They had their own transport and medical service, signal corps, machine-gun company,

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mitrailleuses, and a scouting detachment of twenty Cossack women. Such was the woman soldier as Destiny delivered her into a startled world.

Her movement was a failure, not because of any shortcomings on the part of the women, but because it was based upon a false premise. It assumed that the Russian soldier left the trenches because he was a coward. He was not: he was merely a disillusioned man who had lost all his old gods, and had not yet found new ones worthy of his faith.

Women can fight. Women have the courage, the endurance, even the strength, for fighting. Vera has demonstrated that, and if necessary all the other women of the world can demonstrate it. The issue is no longer a question of whether Vera can fight, but whether Vera should fight. She will fight whenever and wherever she feels she must. She is a potential soldier, and will continue to be until the muddled old world is remade upon a basis of human freedom and safety.

CHAPTER VI

IN THE HOLLOW OF THEIR HAND

TURNING into the Nevsky Prospect was like opening a telegram. I could never be quite certain what I would find there, but the first glance always told the whole story.

Nevsky was the revolutionary thermometer. When the City of Peter pursued the calm and normal way, the wood-paved avenue indicated the fact. When the hectic passions of revolt ran high, the temper of the populace was as plainly registered.

It was on the Nevsky Prospect, in the early days of March, that the first courageous crowd of men and women dared Cossack whips and sabers and cast amazed glances at the soldiers who gave them smiles and words of encouragement when they had expected the stinging lash and the deadly blade. It was here that the multitudes gathered for rejoicing when the victory was won, and here also they came, tragic and proud, bear-

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ing their martyred dead upon their shoulders. Each succeeding moment of joy or grief or protest was recorded here, and I quickly learned to read the signs.

At ten o'clock on a Tuesday morning in July, I stepped out of the Nicolaievski Station into the circle, to find the mercury rising and the Nevsky of the hour strangely different from that with which I had parted. The talking crowds in the Znamensky Square were gone. Alexander III sat alone on the bronze horse, undisputed monarch once more of all he surveyed. There was n't a street-car in sight. The only visible *izvostchik* wanted double his former price to carry me to the War Hotel.

It was the hour when shutters should be coming down from shops. Instead they were fastened tight, and in front of the Gostinny Dvor men were out with hammers, nailing boards across the plate-glass windows. Had something already happened, or was something about to happen? I could not be sure. The *izvostchik* kept up a rapid-fire conversation, pointing an excited finger occasionally toward a freshly made bullet-hole in the glass fronts.

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At the moment I was interested in nothing in the world so much as my clean little blue-and-white room and a hot bath. My trench khaki was caked with mud and reeked of the odors of barracks and stuffy trains. On the way back from the front, I had spent two sleepless nights sandwiched with fourteen other people into a compartment intended to accommodate four. The first night I shared the upper berth with another woman. It was so narrow that we had to lie head to foot. There were no pillows or bedding, and I am sure that neither of us closed our eyes. The next night I insisted on her sleeping alone, and I sat below, listening to the crowd talk. Toward morning a pathetic-looking little peasant woman, nodding uncomfortably back and forth, bumped against me. I glanced at her hair. It was hopelessly in need of a shampoo. I decided that, after all, dirt did n't really matter, and settled her head on my shoulder. She went peacefully to sleep.

This morning all that was past. With soap and water so close at hand, dirt mattered more even than probable revolution. At the hotel I hastened upstairs without stopping to ask ques-

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tions. An hour later I emerged, remade and ready for anything.

I hurried toward the Nevsky. Again the scene was changed, and there was no mistaking the signs. The Bolsheviki were taking possession of the city. The uprising that Petrograd had been expecting hourly for weeks had come. The Bolsheviki, radical minority in the Soviet of Workmen and Soldiers' Deputies, were making a demonstration against coalition with the bourgeoisie. Led by Nicolai Lenine and Leon Trotzky, the Red Guard, composed of armed workers from the factory districts and of sailors from the naval station at Kronstadt, had come out to demand "all power to the Soviet," and with banners of flaming red were crying: "Down with the capitalist ministers!" "Land to the peasants!" "Control of industry by the workers!" and "Immediate general peace!"

The night before, thousands upon thousands of armed workers had marched through the streets singing the "Marseillaise." This morning they were continuing the demonstration in more menacing terms.

The deserted Nevsky was suddenly filled with

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people. Down the street came a huge motor-truck, a vicious-looking machine-gun mounted behind and another on each side. It was filled with Red Guardsmen and sailors. Each man was armed with a rifle, and its threatening nose was pointed in the direction of the crowd.

I stood there watching, wide-eyed and wondering, recalling that whispered prophecy that had been sounding perpetually through the spring days: "The streets of Petrograd will run rivers of blood."

Could it be that these words were about to come true there before my eyes? I could not believe it. Unreality was in the air. The truck looked as if it had been wheeled on to the stage from the property-room. The guns might have been of papier-maché. The occupants themselves seemed like boys playing a new game, rather than like men going out to kill and to die.

An automobile driven by a civilian whirled from a side street. Three sailors and a couple of armed factory workers ordered the chauffeur to halt. They backed their command by pointing their guns at his head, and he promptly

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obeyed. One of them took the front seat. Two stretched themselves flat on the mud-guards and pointed their rifles in front of them. The others climbed into the tonneau. The car whizzed away out of sight.

The crowds on the sidewalk kept one eye on the guns, and one eye on a convenient exit in case of trouble. I walked in the direction of the Hotel Europe. I had gone a distance of three or four blocks when the sound of a shot brought all to a sudden stop. The crowd turned as a single man and fled in the opposite direction. The crowd was quicker and more earnest in flight than I. Before I had time to realize what had happened, I had been knocked to my knees. I found myself jammed against the iron grating of a basement door, with what seemed like half of Petrograd pushing me through the bars.

A moment later some one in the rear shouted, "Kharasho!" (All right), and the crowd climbed off my back. I picked myself up unhurt. A soldier standing near had been shoved through a plate-glass window, and his face and hands were covered with ugly cuts splashing blood liberally on the sidewalk.

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I waited while a formidable armored car passed, then crossed the street and turned the corner leading to the hotel. Just as I reached the entrance, I heard the rush of running footsteps behind me, and turned to see a crowd of men, women, and children tumbling out of the Nevsky as fast as willing legs could carry them.

Off in the direction of the Gostinny Dvor the staccato *rat-a-tat-tat* of machine-guns sounded like the beat of a snare-drum, interrupted at intervals by the sharp, quick crack of rifles.

However much those men with guns had seemed like small boys playing at being dangerous, there was no doubt that the sounds were ominous enough.

All that day Petrograd lay terrified and trembling in the hollow of the Bolsheviki hand. Most of the time the armored cars rode peacefully up and down the Nevsky. Now and then something, nobody knows what, would start things. The guns rattled and the crowds ran.

"Somebody shot from the window," one of the Bolsheviki would venture furiously.

"Provokator! Provokator!" some one in the crowd would cry.

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Occasionally the moan of a wounded man rose above the clatter of hurrying feet, but the guns were mercifully inaccurate and the death toll unbelievably small.

What the night might have brought forth if the weather had been fine, no one can know. Early in the evening it began to rain, and rain has a more dampening effect on the ardor of Russians than any amount of armed force. The populace stayed indoors. There was no one on the Nevsky to see the armored cars rush up and down, so they stopped rushing.

The sailors sailed back to Kronstadt again in the boats that had brought them, and the Red Guard retired to the opposite side of the Neva. Before they left they encountered a group of Cossacks on the Liteiny, and turned the machine-guns on them. The Cossacks wheeled their horses about and fled, but not before half a dozen of them had gone down before the guns. The horses were still there next morning when I ventured out into the rain. Around them stood a curious circle of men and women and little boys in red peasant blouses, who looked as though they expected the beautiful ponies to rise up

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again and tell them what all this trouble was about.

The government crisis was acute. Most of the ministers had resigned. The majority of the Council of Workmen and Soldiers had refused to take all the power. Taking power was a thankless task. The Council was already the government behind the government, and to become the government would be to become the scapegoat for all the various brands of a discontent growing daily more rampant in Russia, and for all those that were to follow as food became scarcer and living more difficult.

Also, the majority of the Deputies, in spite of the general demand for peace, had voted against an immediate and independent termination of the war. The split between the majority made up of Mensheviki and Social Revolutionists and the Bolshevist minority was of ancient origin. It had its inception in the Socialist Conference in Switzerland in 1908, when the Bolsheviki rejected the Menshevist proposal to work with the Russian liberals for the spread of democracy in Russia, and advocated armed revolution. Nicolai Lenin, the leader then, as he is now, called the

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Mensheviki "opportunists," and declared that the masses of the Russian people could never free themselves from economic as well as political slavery, except by means of a class war.

When Kerensky determined to bring troops from the front to defend the government, the executive council of the Soviet sanctioned the decision. By noon on Wednesday, the government, or so much of it as was still in office, began to get things into its own hands. On the Nevsky, that day, a few of the food shops were open, but most of the shutters remained down and the doors barred. There were no street-cars running, and all the bridges except one were swung open. That part of the city that lay beyond the Neva, and is known as the Petrograd side, was practically isolated. Only the palace bridge remained closed, and guards from the troops loyal to Kerensky were stationed at the entrance and examined all who crossed over.

The rain came down in torrents, and the streets were a desert. In the afternoon I walked to the Dvortsovy Square, where the War Department and the General Staff were housed in a great crescent-shaped building fronting the Winter

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Palace. The square had suddenly become an armed camp. Armored cars and Red Cross ambulances, motor-trucks for transporting soldiers, and all the paraphernalia that the Bolsheviki had similarly flaunted on the Nevsky the day before, was drawn up in front of the Staff office, awaiting signs of further disturbance.

All day Thursday and Friday the troops came in from the front. Thursday morning a bicycle regiment arrived, cycled through the city and across the Field of Mars. That evening from the War Hotel I watched an endless procession of Cossacks file through St. Isaac's Square. They came riding on gray horses, the descending sun flashing on the tips of their lances. Blankets and tents, kit-bags and *balalakis* were strapped to their saddles. The regimental band headed the procession, and the regimental priest and four bullocks brought up the rear. Sandwiched in between the soldiers and the priest were the soup kitchens on wheels, and the wagons filled with hay for the horses. They came clattering across the cobbles, making such a din that it hushed the cheers of the bystanders to a whisper.

At midnight I heard a band outside the window

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playing the "Marseillaise." I hurried into the square, to find another procession of soldiers arriving from the front. When the band passed out of hearing, the soldiers tramped to a marching tune of their own making.

Thursday morning the Bolsheviki were still in control of the Fortress of Peter and Paul, and were directing their operations from the palace of a famous ballet-dancer who had been a favorite of the Tsar.

Friday morning the Neva was swarming with people. Most of the shops opened, and the street-cars were running on their usual uncertain schedule. The trouble seemed to be over, yet Petrograd's nerves were not quite relaxed.

At twelve that night I was lying in bed reading, when suddenly again came the unmistakable sputterings of the machine-guns and the crack of rifles. I slipped into a dressing-gown and out into the hall. It was rapidly filling with officers and their wives, all in a similar state of undress. The lights were quickly extinguished. Nobody could tell where the firing was, but it seemed to be directly below us.

I leaned out of the window on the sixth floor

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and looked at the square. Nothing was visible in the strange gray light of that darkest hour of the white night. There were no shouts, no cries, no single sound but the rattle of the machine-gun and the bark of the rifles.

The women stood about in frightened groups, talking in hushed tones. "It's civil war," somebody said. "The streets will run blood before this thing is over."

An officer arriving at that moment reassured them.

"You have nothing to fear here," he said. "They are fighting on the palace bridge across the Neva. Some troops just landed from the front have been attacked by the Bolsheviki."

At one o'clock we crept back to our beds. The firing had stopped as suddenly as it had commenced. At two the silence was broken by a few stray rifle shots on the Morskaya in front of the telephone exchange two blocks away. After that there was quiet for the night.

By Sunday fear had lifted from the heavy heart of Petrograd. Her people were being happy while they could. St. Isaac's Square was flooded with sunshine. The church bells, deep resound-

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ing bases and tinkling sopranos, called the faithful to worship.

The nerves of Petrograd were completely relaxed. This sunny, smiling summer afternoon had been bought and paid for. But for the evidence of mangled bodies in the hospital morgues, we might have dreamed the week just past. But for the boarded windows in the Nevsky, and the sentries still guarding the telephone exchange and encamped before the Winter Palace, the sound of the machine-guns and the sight of the frightened crowd fleeing in terror might have been only a nightmare. There were no rivers of blood; the gutters did not run red. There was only a handful of victims where we had feared there might be hundreds.

The Bolsheviki proclaimed the uprising a success. They said they had no desire for bloodshed, and wished only to make a demonstration of power. They had done that, and were satisfied. The riots were significant chiefly because they introduced the Bolsheviki to a world that was soon to know much more of them, and because they foreshadowed events to come.

The Cossacks were hailed as deliverers. The

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conservative and reactionary papers wrote pæans of praise of them. The moderate Socialist press was silent. Though they had been in favor of the suppression of the Bolshevik uprising, their traditional hatred of the system of force for which the Cossacks stood made it impossible for them to rejoice. Some of the Cossacks refused to accept the rôle of hero, and passed a resolution declaring that they did not wish to be praised by the bourgeoisie. They made it clear that they were revolutionists who were with the working-people and that they could not be counted upon to defend bourgeois law and order against the masses. It was the beginning of the breach in the Cossack ranks—a breach that was to be a vital factor in revolutionary movements of the future.

Late one afternoon the soldiers carried their dead in silver coffins into the great cool recesses of St. Isaac's Cathedral, and laid them in state before the "holy gate," with the towering columns of lapis lazuli and malachite to keep watch through the night.

The next morning the soldiers gathered in the square, black mourning flags fluttering from the

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tops of their lances. There were thousands and thousands of them—a military spectacle such as Petrograd had not seen since the days of the Tsars. The cavalry lined up on both sides of the square, their horses standing at perfect attention. The infantry stacked their rifles and squatted on the cobblestones during the long mass. The priests, in mourning robes of black and silver, carried ecclesiastical banners; and the caskets were borne on ornate canopied hearses drawn by black horses.

There were Red Cross nurses carrying huge wreaths of artificial flowers. Foreign diplomats and members of the Allied military missions came to pay their respects. And, just as the last coffin was carried from the church, a limousine drove up. Alexander Kerensky stepped out and fell into line, and a mighty cheer broke from the crowd.

The funeral procession lasted most of the day. Scouts rode along the line of march, ordering all windows to be closed against the stray shots of provokators. There were no carriages, no automobiles. In Russia they follow their dead to their graves on foot, and the tragic strains of the

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Russian funeral music sob their way into your very soul.

The casual observer in Petrograd would have said that revolutionary disturbances were a thing of the past; that order had come to stay. But the casual observer would have failed to understand the breadth and depth of the movements stirring beneath the surface.

As I stood watching the funeral procession file past, an acquaintance, opposed to the new Russian order, joined me for a minute. "This is the end of Socialism," he said triumphantly.

On the contrary, it was only the beginning of the class struggle in the Revolution.

CHAPTER VII

OLD RIVERS AND NEW DOCTRINES

LEON TROTZKY, Bolshevik leader, was secure in jail. Nicolai Lenin was in hiding. Those who believed he was in the employ of the German government declared he had escaped to Berlin. Those who still held to the belief that you can kill a movement by putting its leaders behind bars, or driving them underground, proudly boasted that the Bolsheviks were crushed.

One night several of us were having dinner in a little Italian restaurant. The argument of the evening—there was always an argument in Russia—was about the origin of the Bolshevik movement. One man declared that the thing was a German plot. There was a new member of the American colony at dinner that night. Williams was his name—Albert Rhys Williams. He was decidedly an American type, tall, with a pleasant, frank face and a delightfully inclusive smile. He had been in Belgium at the time of the Ger-

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man advance, and had written a book on his experiences in the claws of the German eagle. He had come to Russia some time before, but had been away from Petrograd, meeting the peasants and workers. He took no part in the discussions for some time. Finally he said:

“I wonder how many Bolsheviki you know?”

We looked from one to another, and had to admit that our acquaintance in that quarter was rather limited.

“You know, it makes such a difference when we know people,” he said. “There is Peters, now;” and he told the story of Peters, and of half a dozen others whom he had met.

“I think it would be ridiculous to suppose there is no German money in the Bolshevik movement,” he said, “because there is German money everywhere. But the movement itself is far more fundamental. Remember, Trotzky and Lenin are preaching to-day the doctrine they were preaching fifteen years ago. It seems to me short-sighted and dangerous to dismiss the Bolsheviki without more knowledge of him and his ideas.”

Mr. Williams's story of Peters had interested

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I began asking is there a God. When the thunderstorm came again, I prayed. One day I was sent to see my grandmother. On the way I met a stranger. We walked together, and it was a long journey. I asked him about all the things that were troubling me. He gave me two pamphlets. One was called 'The Tenth Man.' I had wondered why father, who was not nearly so clever as the workers, should have a whole vote for himself, while the workers had only one vote for ten men. I read the pamphlets, and at school I told my comrades about them. We published a paper about it; but the teacher confiscated it and sent for my parents. My father beat me, and I hated him. From that moment I became a revolutionist."

At the age of fifteen Peters left home and went to work in a shop. He joined a revolutionary organization, and was four times thrown into prison. He and his comrades were stood up against a wall while they counted out every tenth man and killed him. He saw his best friend shot down in this fashion, and dozens of other comrades. Every act of oppression and repression only made him a more determined revolutionist.

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A typical street scene in the Volga river towns

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OLD RIVERS AND NEW DOCTRINES

He escaped from prison, and lived in France, Switzerland, and England, helping as best he could his companions still in Russia. At the time of the Revolution in March he was holding an excellent position as manager of the import department of a large English mercantile company. He wore a frock-coat on Sundays, and walked out with his English "missis" and his little girl in the height of order and respectability.

But the call of free Russia, the call of the Revolution, was too strong for him. He came back to rejoice and fight. He became the leader of the Lettish Socialists, and worked day and night for the cause in which he believed. He made flying trips to Petrograd, and usually managed to drop in for a few minutes while he was there. One night he drew a slip of paper from his pocket and asked me if I recognized the signature. I

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30

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Barges of wood on the Neva

OLD RIVERS AND NEW DOCTRINES

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"Why, it 's Lenin," I said. "Then he 's here?"

Peters nodded.

"I 've seen him to-day," he said. "This is the candidate's ticket for the Constituent Assembly. They have given him to me, because our district is the most radical and we can elect him there."

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"And you are absolutely sure that Lenin is an honest revolutionist and not a pro-German?" I asked.

He raised his head with a toss of defiance and his blue eyes flashed fire.

"If I was n't sure I would n't have this," he said.

We had bitter arguments, but he did not resent my disagreement. He knew that I was trying honestly and sympathetically to understand all of the forces at work in the Revolution, and he respected that effort. Through him I met many other Bolsheviki, and they talked frankly of their dreams and their schemes.

One day a man showed me a letter from Trotzky, written in prison. It was a call to his followers—not for himself, but for his ideas. They told me that he was in constant touch with the men of his party, and was doing quite as effective work in prison as he could have done out.

Jacob Peters told me much of the methods by which prisoners communicated with each other and the outside world. Occasionally a newspaper was smuggled in, and the man who received it read it hidden half under a blanket, with one

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eye on the spy-hole in the door, watching for the guard, and then tapped its contents on the wall to the prisoner in the next cell. By a system of dots placed according to a prearranged code under the letters in a book, the men inside the prison were kept informed of what their comrades outside were doing.

The most elaborate scheme Peters concocted was carried out with the aid of a girl revolutionist. He was trying to escape, but he was deep in the black books of the prison officials and was allowed no reading matter. He took a piece of black bread, chewed it until it was in a sticky paste, and spread it on his arm to dry. Once dry it was as tough as a piece of parchment. He put his message on one side and rolled the parchment into a small ball. Just as the girl was leaving, he asked permission of the guard to kiss her good-by through the bars. The guard, seeing no harm in an innocent kiss, consented. The girl was immediately on the alert for a message. Peters slipped the ball into his mouth, and in the kiss transferred it to hers. She carried out his directions, and he succeeded in escaping.

As July wore into August, there was little go-

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ing on in Petrograd, and I decided to take a journey to see if I could find out how the new doctrines were being received in some of the older and more remote parts of Russia. Various stories of the dangers of travel came to us.

Russian acquaintances and old residents in the foreign colony discouraged attempting travel; but an American friend, Helen Smith, a kindred spirit in eagerness for the trail, agreed to go with me. Miss Smith, who is an expert on the subject of peasant art, had traveled to Russia four times since the war. She spoke the language, and had a genuine understanding and a very real appreciation of the people. The pictured dangers had very little reality for either of us. We determined to go to Moscow, and from there to Nizhni Novgorod by rail, then up the Volga in a river steamer.

There has always been a strange lure for me in names. "Mother Volga," as the Russians call the largest and most romantic river in Europe, was one of the places in which I believed as one believes in fairies one never expects to see. The Russians speak its name with a caress. No other

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river in the world, unless it be the Nile, has been surrounded by so much story.

The Volga is the great highway of Russia from Petrograd to the Caspian Sea. To Nizhni Novgorod, where the Volga and Oka rivers meet, the commerce of the world comes flowing. Here they hold the most famous of Russia's sixteen hundred annual fairs.

The fair lasts for forty days; and for ninety-nine summers rug merchants from Persia, trappers from Siberia, silk dealers from China, wool kings from Manchuria, Turks and Arabs, Gypsies and Caucasians, Eastern and Continental tradesmen of all kinds, have come as regularly as the hot breezes that blow off the lazy, sleepy Old Volga. The exotic color, the weird customs, the strange play of the children of this patch-quilt earth all gathered under the same piece of sky, have made it a prolonged fête day and night from beginning to end.

Here, on the hundredth anniversary, we found the fair pathetically trying to pretend itself open. We drove through streets, miles and miles of streets, whose sides were packed solidly with

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bazaars. They were yellow-painted and green-roofed, as always, but padlocked doors told the story. The 200,000,000-ruble fair on the banks of the ancient river was virtually closed. In one of the main buildings a band tried hopelessly to rouse the spirits of the crowd; but the result was more gruesome than laughter at a funeral. There was little for sale: a sordid mass of tawdry trinkets made in Germany and Japan, a few sugarless sweetmeats—that was all.

Our boat sailed at eight o'clock at night, picking its way between the twinkling red and green lights gathered at the meeting of the rivers. Before we went, we took an elevator to the top of the bluff to dine in an out-of-doors café. Food seemed quite as scarce here as in Petrograd, and even more expensive. We ordered some beef cutlets (the Russian equivalent of hamburg steak). We waited and we waited; they did not come. We enlisted the efforts of the head waiter, who poured an avalanche of words upon his assistants. Still they did not come. The hour of sailing drew nearer and nearer. We watched the clock, and, when there was not another second to spare, prepared to leave. The cutlets ar-

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rived. We wrapped them in paper napkins and took them with us.

It was well we did; for war and revolution, whatever else it had done, had certainly robbed the Volga chefs of all their far-famed talents. I tried from six o'clock to eleven one night to persuade the cabin-boy to get me something to eat.

I wondered, as I looked at the fertile fields along the Volga, how much they knew of the part they would play in the coming course of revolution. Even the gods seemed cruel to the cities of the north; for on the Volga, where transportation facilities were adequate, the spring rains had been so light that the crops were far below normal; and down in the south, where weather conditions had proved ideal, the railways were too disorganized to move the grain.

The boat stopped at every little town along the way, and the landings were a series of Rapine pictures. Now it was a gang of stevedores in full cotton trousers with inch-wide stripes of gay color, and crude straw sandals upon their unstockinged feet. They dragged their heavy cargoes down to the boat's edge with ropes held over

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their shoulders, singing a weird rhythmical tune of the Volga to time their movements. Again, it was a group of gypsies on the dock's edge, camped for the night—the naked brown babies swarming under the feet of the Volga giants, who dodged them uncomplainingly.

Everywhere we found the people talking revolution, and the phrases that sounded through the streets of Petrograd were familiar here. We bought the newspapers. Several of them were trying desperately to rouse the people to the great Germanic danger. Miss Smith read them to me. Many of the appeals were from the Zemstvo Unions. One from the Kineshna Revolutionary Committee said:

“We are facing a great disaster for free Russia. Absolute ruin threatens us, and the triumph of the armed fist of William, if we are not bold enough to oppose to him a steel-like strength of the revolutionary army. Famine and its results threaten us, and the counter-revolution is making use of this. We must at once be bold enough to rectify our food question, to exert great efforts over this and other dangers. An-

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The Volga--the great highway of Russia from Petrograd to the Caspian Sea





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"In Nizhni-Novgorod, where the Oka and the Volga rivers meet, the commerce of the world comes flowing"

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archy and counter-revolution threaten to restore the old régime under William.

“A despicable peace, giving us into the claws of our enemy, threatens us unless we take immediate steps. All who can must be ready to go to the front to take the place of the worn and exhausted warriors—ready to hurl back the enemy or die in the attempt. It is a question of saving the land and the Revolution. The army is in need of ammunition, food, clothing, and uninterrupted transfer. The workmen must place the interests of the land and the Revolution above all else and raise their standard of work to the maximum. The peasants must give all the bread they can spare. All to work, to work! The danger is great!”

There was no doubt that the new doctrines had found their way to the banks of the old rivers. Petrograd was not the only place where revolution interfered with work, and proclamations and counter-proclamations kept the populace in a turmoil of doubt and desire.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MAN ON HORSEBACK

SEPTEMBER came. The padlocked doors of Nizhni Novgorod and the quiet waters of the Volga seemed far, far away. Farther still were the hectic days of early June when the recalcitrant machine-guns sputtered up and down the Nevsky. The white nights were gone. The soldier lovers and their sweethearts strolled beside the Neva now only at the invitation of the infrequent moon.

The War Hotel had undergone a transformation. After living for a whole summer each unto himself alone, breakfasting, lunching, teaing, and dining in our own rooms, we suddenly came out of hiding and looked one another over.

The bloodstains of the Revolution had been scoured from the rose-colored carpet in the drawing-room. The boards had come down from the broken windows, and new glass and gorgeous

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crushed mulberry curtains had taken their place. The dining-room, a few weeks ago the repository of armless chairs and legless tables, dumb victims of the vengeance of an angry mob, now fronted the world arrayed in white napery.

It was a setting for luxury, but there was none. When Feodor served luncheon, the first course was often chopped meat and *kasha* stuffed into cabbage leaves, and the second the same chopped meat and *kasha* inadequately hidden by the half of a cucumber. There was no third. We had the best the market offered, and the cook was sorely tested to disguise its limitations.

A new spirit was abroad in the streets. The ghost of Peter walked with firmer tread. Many of the predicted calamities of the foregoing weeks had failed to materialize. Finland had not revolted. Ukraine was still a part of Russia. The railroad strike continued only a threat. The breach between Kerensky and Korniloff, scheduled for the Moscow conference, had been averted.

The reactionaries still clamored for the strong hand of a dictator. The Bolsheviki still cried, "Down with the bourgeoisie." Kerensky strove

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desperately to follow a middle course satisfactory to both. He knew his people well enough to realize that the first attempt to use force, even if he had it to use, would result in a reaction that would ultimately mean the downfall of his government.

In the hours I had spent at the Soviet, in the Peasants' Convention, and talking with soldiers and workmen everywhere, I had become convinced there was no power in Russia that Kerensky or any other man could use; that the masses would regard any attempt to instal a dictator as an attack on their Revolution and would desert the man responsible for it.

I ventured this opinion one night at dinner. Mrs. Pankhurst, the English suffragist, was there, and four or five others. They laughed at the idea; said Russia must have a strong hand; called Kerensky a weakling, and declared that only Korniloff could save the situation. He would rule with an iron hand.

One group of foreigners in Petrograd saw clearly the hopelessness of trying to impose a man on horseback upon the Russian workers. They were the members of the American Red

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Cross Mission to Russia. They came quietly into town one afternoon in August, with seventy tons of surgical supplies in their kit-bags, a large amount of common sense in their heads, and a wealth of human sympathy in their hearts. I was at the Nicolaievski Station when they arrived, twenty-nine of them, all in uniform of the American Red Cross. I looked at them and said to myself: "I wonder what sort of a dent you will make in Russia."

In one of the uniforms was the ample girth and the smiling round face of Colonel William B. Thompson, who was financing the mission. To the left of him, towering like an iron-gray mountain above the crowd, was Dr. Frank Billings of Chicago. On the other side, Raymond Robins, dark and determined, with a ready-for-anything look about him. There was something big about this trio, and they went to work on the Russian job in the best American spirit—with their sleeves rolled up.

They met the Russian aristocrat and the Russian bourgeois. Then they met the Russian people. Breshkovskaya and Tchaikovski, grandmother and grandfather of the Russian Revolu-

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tion, opened for them a door through which they looked down a long vista of hard years at the stupendous struggle of a brave crowd.

They saw that the old altars had been broken to bits, and the one vital, hopeful thing remaining was the devotion of the masses to their Revolution. They had no faith in the altruistic intention of the German, and believed for Russia to stop fighting would be suicidal. Kerensky and Breshkovskaya held the same belief, but they knew also that the war-weary multitudes were possessed of a consuming longing for peace; that German propaganda was working to discredit the Allies and to convince the Russians that the German people sympathized with their Revolution and shared their longing for democratic peace. Almost daily they were supplementing their propaganda by blowing up munition plants and laying whole towns in ruins.

Raymond Robins, who brought to his study of the situation valuable experience in the American labor movement, said to me, in one of the first conversations we had:

“The only binder that will hold New Russia together is the Revolution. The only way to

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help Russia is to help her make a success of that Revolution."

The Provisional Government was in power. At its head was Alexander Kerensky, the young man. He and Katherine Breshkovskaya, the old, old woman, in spite of the fact that the forced offensive on the southwest front in July had weakened both, were at this time still the mouth-pieces of the majority. They were the only government there was. The Mission invested its energies in trying to help the government in its difficult problems of administration. Unfortunately, most of the other Allied representatives failed to share their opinion, or the results might have been different.

Suddenly Riga fell. The news of its actual occupation surprised no one. It had long been conceded in Petrograd that the Germans could take it whenever they chose. From the military standpoint, it had little significance. It was chiefly useful to the German militarists as a scalp to dangle before the war-weary section of their own populace. The Russian advocates of a dictator seized upon it as a weapon with which to attack Kerensky. They blamed the leniency of

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the Kerensky policy and the breakdown of the army for the fall of Riga. There were charges and counter-charges. The soldiers vehemently denounced their officers, accusing them of betraying the city to the Germans. One regiment of Lettish troops had refused to retreat when ordered, and fought until they were wiped out almost to a man. Most of them were Bolsheviki, and they asserted that their officers were selling Riga to defeat their Revolution.

The Germans were reported marching on Petrograd. Refugees fleeing from Riga poured into the city. There was not a spare room anywhere. Almost as many people were trying to get out of the city as were trying to get in. They stood in queues before the railway offices all day and all night, trying to buy tickets that would take them anywhere beyond the reach of the Germans.

The anniversary of the sixth month of Russian freedom was at hand. Petrograd, ready at all times to expect the worst, believed there would be some tragic celebration of the day. Part of it trembled in its boots for fear of a Bolshevik uprising; more of it predicted a German air raid;

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some of it longingly scanned the horizon for a Russian Napoleon. Nobody was prepared for what happened, and everybody was still more amazed by what did not happen. When the official announcement was made, "the Korniloff adventure has been liquidated," the populace was still gasping.

Every man, woman, and child in Petrograd believed the city was about to become the battleground of the bloodiest conflict the world had ever seen. What else was there to believe? Were not the troops of General Korniloff, counted the strongest man in the Russian army, marching on Petrograd to capture the capital and proclaim their leader military dictator? Was not the advancing horde headed by the "savage" division—wildest of the wild Cossacks? Were not the government soldiers, charged with protecting the country against counter-revolution at any cost, marching out to meet them in bloody combat? Korniloff had announced his dictatorship, and offered Kerensky the portfolio of Minister of Justice. Kerensky had declined.

In the War Hotel, storm center of the storm center, we sat and awaited the inevitable. I

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dined that night with a Polish doctor who talked in low, mysterious tones. All around us were officers with various degrees of political belief, ranging from princes suspected of monarchistic tendencies to the most radical of the radicals. All were talking in low, mysterious tones. We spoke of Korniloff.

"He is a very desperate man; a very courageous man," he said. "I was in the battle of Mukden with him, and he remained when all the others of the staff had gone. He is very determined. I do not know what will happen, but I know he is a determined man."

This fact no one questioned. Whatever the political slant of the speaker, it never occurred to any one to suggest that the man whose military exploits are almost legendary might have started something he could not finish.

"He is determined; but Kerensky is also a determined man," one Russian told me that night. "So it will be a fight to the finish."

During the evening Arno Dosch Flurot, an American correspondent, came in to advise me to leave the hotel and go somewhere else for the night.

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"The hotel may still be here in the morning, but it may not, and there is no use in taking chances," he said.

Rumor had promised me so many tragic ends—she had cried "Wolf, wolf!" so many times—that I had become skeptical.

The lobby was swarming with excited officers. Messengers from the staff and the various embassies dashed in and out all evening. A few of the officers were loyal to Kerensky, and their faces were grim and troubled. Most of the others were waiting with open arms to welcome the Dictator, and they made no attempt to hide the joy they felt. For them it was all settled. Kerensky would be overthrown—Korniloff would capture the city. The death penalty would be restored; the leaders of the Soviet would be hanged. Russia's troubles would be over.

I could not see Russia in such simple terms. I did not believe that the Russian Revolution could be understood in the terms of the French Revolution. I felt very small and alone when, at midnight, I left the chattering groups and went up to my little room. I was too engrossed in what was going to happen to Russia to care the

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least bit about what happened to me. I sat down before my typewriter and wrote until three, and then went to bed.

At five o'clock I was awakened from a sound sleep by a loud knocking. I jumped quickly up and opened the door. I looked out upon a sea of cutlasses. The hall was filled with Russian sailors, perhaps a couple hundred of them, husky chaps with rifles in their hands, and every rifle topped with the most bloodthirsty-looking blade I had ever seen. Life holds no further terrors for the man or woman who has faced two hundred such weapons all gathered in one spot. An Atlantic Ocean submarine would seem like a friendly neighbor come to call.

Still dazed with sleep, I looked at them uncomprehendingly. What had happened? Were they Bolsheviki from Kronstadt who had captured the hotel? Was the city already in the possession of Korniloff? Was the battle going on downstairs at that very moment?

There was no one to answer my questions. I said something in English. A smile passed over the faces of the half dozen sailors nearest me. "Nechevo," they said in chorus.

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It is the most reassuring word in the Russian language—the first I learned, and the last I shall forget. It means “Never mind,” “Don’t worry,” and other things of a kindred nature.

“Kharasho?” I asked.

“Kharasho nechevo,” came back the double reassurance.

I had learned that, so far as I was concerned at least, everything was all right. I closed the door and dressed.

Fifteen minutes later there was a great clatter of guns and marching feet, and when I went out into the hall again our visitors had gone. On all the landings, women, pale and terrified, were huddled in small groups, talking. A thousand sailors had taken possession of the hotel, examined passports, searched rooms, and arrested fourteen officers. They were not from Korniloff or Kerensky, but from the government behind the government—the Soviet. The Workmen’s and Soldiers’ Deputies had decided to take things into their own hands and arrest all officers whom they suspected of counter-revolutionary tendencies.

I stopped to talk with some of the women.

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One of them spoke to me in English—beautiful English. Her husband had been arrested but released immediately.

“This hotel is a terrible place,” she said. “We Russians are mad, quite mad, all of us. Why do you stay here when you do not have to? I would go away—far, far away, to England or your America.”

She was a Russian princess, and from that morning on I saw much of her. She was exquisitely pretty and completely helpless, a typical flower of Russian culture. I told her once that she reminded me of an orchid.

“Ah, *orchidée*,” she said. “I like that; they are so beautiful.” Then, nodding her head with a wise little smile, she said. “But I know what you mean. You mean that I am a parasite.”

Always after that I called her “Orchidée.” The pathos of her helplessness appealed to me, and also a certain loyalty that kept her in Petrograd with her husband, when most of her friends had fled to the Caucasus or the Crimea or gone abroad.

“I love my husband,” she told me. “It is very bourgeois of me, I know, but I can’t help it.”

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Her husband was an officer in the Guard, and she lived in hourly terror of his arrest. This day he had escaped, but there were others who were not so fortunate. At lunch-time several familiar figures were absent from the dining-room, and here and there a woman with troubled eyes sat alone.

In the following days we lived as much in the dark as to the actual state of affairs as if we had been in America.

Kerensky declared Korniloff counter-revolutionist and traitor. The Workmen and Soldiers in Petrograd, convinced that their Revolution and their throats were both in danger, worked day and night in the munition plants, and prepared to throw a trench around the great city. Another part of the populace looked upon Korniloff as a deliverer, and waited impatiently for his coming.

All over Russia the people, unable to get the truth, traded in rumor. Down in the Caucasus the newspapers came out with lurid details of battles in the Nevsky and thousands of dead bodies strewing the streets.

While we were still in the dark as to what was

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happening, I went one morning to the Winter Palace, and climbed the stairs to Katherine Breshkovskaya's little room. Through all the troubled days of the last six months, she had been the right-hand lieutenant of Kerensky.

I found her, slipping her cloak over her calico wrapper and starting out to rally the soldiers to the support of the government. She was seventy-three years old. I had formed the habit of dropping in on the Babushka, who loved Americans and always had a radiant welcome. I climbed the marble stairs as one would climb a mountain, to get away from the tangle of petty things below, to look out over a distant vista, to see a broad view. Always I came away with the sense of having been on the heights, close to something big and fine, with a grandmotherly kiss upon my cheek and the memory of a friendly hand-clasp. Once, knowing well the burden of her answer, but curious to know how she would phrase it, I asked:

"What do you think of Kerensky?"

She lifted her chin high and, with the ring of sincere faith in her voice, spoke in her quaint English:

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“Very well I think of him. He is a square man, and, what is better, he is not selfish. He needs no glory. He works only for the welfare of the people, and not only his people but for all the Allies, too. He is all around a good man. It is not strange to have a good man; but to have a man who is good and brave and clever is unusual. I esteem him from the profound of my soul.”

During the Korniloff rebellion she amply proved her faith; for day and night she went from barracks to barracks, urging the soldiers to stand by Kerensky.

From Babushka I went to Red Cross Headquarters at the Hotel Europe, to find a dismal group. Some suave and kindly gentleman had just confided to Colonel Thompson, quite pleasantly, that the hangings would begin at three o'clock that afternoon.

“If the old crowd comes back to Russia, I'm through. I don't want to stay,” said the Colonel; and Raymond Robins nodded a gloomy second.

If the weight of Russia and of the world had been upon our shoulders, we could have been no more serious about it. We wept for the Petro-

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grad front. We wept that only a few miles distant Russians were killing Russians, and nothing could be done to stop it. We might have saved our tears. The "savage" forces of General Korniloff and the troops of Kerensky had taken things into their own hands and were settling them in their own way. They were using the new Russian method of liquidation—they were fraternizing. The only shot fired was that with which one of Korniloff's officers killed himself. The soldiers turned the bloody civil war into a fiasco. The "wild" Cossacks refused to kill their fellows. Korniloff was captured and placed under arrest, and the government announced that the Korniloff adventure had been liquidated.

The serious consequences were of another nature than bloodshed. The workers declared themselves through with all attempts to coöperate with the bourgeoisie. Korniloff's friends accused Kerensky of double dealing. He was unable to explain himself to the satisfaction of his followers, and they began to distrust him. As nearly as I can gather from the investigation of many stories, Kerensky became possessed of

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knowledge that Korniloff, probably without his own knowledge, was being used by counter-revolutionists to overthrow the government. Keren-sky made overtures to trap Korniloff into admissions that would condemn him. By the time he had gained his object, he had involved himself so far that it was impossible to explain. His intentions were unquestionably of the highest, but his methods were not those that a popular hero can use and remain on the high pedestal that his followers demand.

The first attempt to instal a man on horseback resulted in driving the radical forces further and further to the left and creating a mass solidarity that was ultimately to prove fatal to the existing order.

The Korniloff adventure paved the way for the Bolsheviki Revolution.

CHAPTER IX

THE CENTRABALT MAKES AN EXCEPTION

SINCE the days of the March Revolution, women have not been permitted aboard the Russian fleet. The sailors, with the memory of Rasputin still fresh in their minds, settled this as soon as they took command.

"Women have played so much hell in politics in the past, we better not take any chances in the future," one of them suggested.

For seven months the rule was rigidly kept. One afternoon in October, I, all unmindful of the prohibition, walked up the gang-plank of the *Polar Star* as she lay on the gray waters of the Gulf of Finland.

Half hidden in the heavy gray autumn mist were the battleships of the Baltic Fleet, decked in their proud new names of revolution. There was the one time *Nicholas II*, now the *Tavarisch* (Comrade). There, also, were the *Grazhdanin*

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(Citizen), formerly the *Tsarevitch*; and, most important of all, the *Respublica* (Republic). Not far away lay a wounded cruiser recently returned from battle with the Germans in their attack on the islands at the entrance to the Gulf. A British submarine, come unscathed through the fighting, rode safe and snug in the tidy little harbor.

Mr. Williams was with me that afternoon, and an English friend of the *Polar Star's* captain. The captain gave me a puzzled, almost frightened look as he saw me stepping aboard. The Englishman introduced us, and explained our desire to see the famous yacht.

"I'm very sorry," the captain said politely, "but women are not allowed aboard the fleet. It is a rule of the committee."

I must have looked my disappointment. The captain glanced sympathetically at me, then at a closed door at the end of a long passage.

"The committee is meeting in there in the Tsar's quarter. Perhaps they will make an exception. I will ask," he said.

If a Russian naval officer had been told, a year before, that the day would come when he would

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have to ask permission of the sailors to bring a guest aboard his own command, he would have sent for the ship's doctor and ordered a padded cell prepared for his informant.

I thanked him, and he disappeared. A few minutes later he returned. The permission had been granted. He led the way into the officers' saloon and from there to his own cabin.

All of the sacred precincts of the old days were closed to us. They were still sacred, but sacred to the new owners of the Russian navy—the delegates of the fleet, the Russian sailors.

The captain was speaking:

"They used to cover this with velvet when the Tsar was on board," he said, with a sweep of his hand. "I'm sorry I can not show you the Tsar's quarters. You would be interested. They have left the grand piano and some of the most valuable things in Petrograd."

He led us to a point where we could peep curiously down a long passage, lined on either side with the cabins de luxe of the Tsarevitch, the Grand Duchess Titania, and other members of the Imperial family, to a closed door at the end.

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Behind that closed door was the organization of "common" sailors ruling the Russian waters—one of the most characteristically new things in all new Russia.

While the captain turned to speak to a soldier who had come up, we held a hurried consultation, mustered our various credentials, and appealed to the ship's officer once more to act in the capacity of go-between and ask the committee to receive us.

Again he left, and we waited anxiously for the closed door to open. A few minutes later, in the great saloon where Nicholas II once dispensed hospitality and favors, sixty Russian sailors, sitting in daily session in their regular headquarters, gallantly offered me the freedom of the Baltic Fleet.

The president arose, shook hands with us, and made a brief speech of welcome to the Americans, asking the captain to interpret it to us. Then the secretary arose, and on behalf of the committee invited us to dine at the Sailors' Club in Helsingfors that night.

"We sent some one to telephone for our bandmaster who is an American," he said. "Until he

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comes we will go on with the business of our meeting, if you will permit."

The business before the Baltic Fleet concerned soldiers on the Riga front. News of the distress of the northern army had reached them, and they were collecting money and buying warm clothing to send to the men who were hungry and cold in the trenches.

With the help of the captain, we had discovered so much when the band-master arrived:

In that committee meeting were eight Mensheviki, three Anarchist communists, nine Social Revolutionists, and forty-five Bolsheviki. Those figures were the most significant I found in all of Russia. Before the Korniloff rebellion there had been only eighteen Bolsheviki in the committee, and no Anarchists. The men were chosen by the vote of the entire fleet, and they reflected the complete swing to the left that was taking place in Russia from Vladivostok to the Black Sea.

The sailors, almost to a man, believe in the principles of internationalism, in the socialization of land and the control of industry by the workers. To them the Revolution meant the ultimate

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realization of all these dreams. Up to the time of the Korniloff rebellion, they were inclined to adopt the Mensheviki methods and to be patient. The Korniloff affair, regarded by them as an attack on the Revolution, swept away patience and shoved them into the ranks of the extremists.

Patriotism, in the old sense, was absolutely lacking among the sailors, as it was among the workmen; but there was a more burning form of patriotism aboard the fleet in October than any inspired in the past by the thought of the Tsar or the greatness of all the Russias—patriotism for the Revolution. The sailor, partly because he is of a more adventurous and daring spirit, partly because he has more education and has drunk more deeply from the fountain of radical books, naturally took a more extreme position than the soldier. There was only fifteen per cent. illiteracy in the Russian navy, while seventy-five per cent. of the soldiers were unable to read or write.

The committee governing the fleet was composed of six sub-committees. Food for officers and men was controlled by the supply committee, which decided the menus. The sailors gave

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themselves tea and bread and butter at eight o'clock; soup and meat at twelve; potatoes, rice, or *kasha* at six; and tea again at eleven. On Sundays fruit compôte was added. The officers' fare was much more varied and more extensive.

A *komplectatsea*, or "make-up committee," decided all problems relating to the crews. A "selection committee" studied the men to find promising material to make officers. The judiciary committee was the new disciplinarian. Disputes between officers and men were submitted to it, and when the offenses were serious civil lawyers were employed to defend the men.

Discipline in the old days was entirely in the hands of the officers, from whom there was no appeal. If an officer was naturally an amiable fellow, fortunate were the men who served under him. If his good nature was dependent upon his luck at cards, the quality of his wine, or the momentary condition of his department of the interior, the lot of the sailor might not be a happy one.

Fortunately for the sailors, the average of humanity is fairly decent, whether it be Russian or anything else, and there were men in the Rus-

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sian navy who did not abuse their power. But there were enough of the other kind to stir a deep and intense bitterness in the breast of the Russian sailor, and this hatred found tragic utterance when the Revolution came.

The Englishman who was with us had been aboard one of the ships during the March Revolution.

"In the passion of the moment, they killed some of the good ones and left some of the bad ones," he said. "Just one man was killed on our ship. He was a high-handed, hot-headed chap, and when they told him of the Revolution he scoffed at them—said there was n't any new régime in Petrograd, and never would be. His servant whipped out a gun. 'We'll show you whether there is a new régime,' he said, and shot him."

Many of the crews simply arrested their officers, and some asked them to sign a paper declaring they would support the Revolution. As nearly as I can learn, sixty-five men were killed on the Baltic Sea Fleet, and a hundred on the Black Sea Fleet. The first day of the Revolution, the sailors revenged themselves on the whole

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order of discipline, and it was hot blood that determined life and death. When the committee was formed, the killing was stopped.

At the time of the Korniloff rebellion, four officers belonging to one of the ships were taken out and killed, against the protest of the Central Committee. Once more the sailors, madened by what they believed to be an attack on the Revolution, took things into their own hands. They put three questions to their officers:

“Do you belong to the Soviet and Kerensky, or Korniloff?”

“If Korniloff takes Petrograd, will you go to take it from him?”

“If Korniloff tells you to go to Petrograd and fight the Provisional Government, will you go?”

Their answers to these questions saved or cost them their lives. The sailors formed their own committee and pronounced the death sentence.

The lot of the naval officer in Russia was no more enviable than that of the army officer; but it was a direct and logical result of the régime that made masters of the few and slaves of the many.

At Viborg and at some of the other points, the

Korniloff, his staff and Cossack bodyguard from the "Wild Division"

Bicycle troops to the rescue of Kerensky

Baltic sailors' bayonets speak for the Soviet

A dining-room in the Matrosski Klub (Sailors' Club), Helsingfors

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fate of the officers was far worse than at Helsingfors, and the stories told about the deaths they died are not pretty ones. The training and tradition of a naval officer unfitted him for faith in the new order, contradicted the belief of a lifetime and the heritage of generations. The chasm that yawned between officers and men was too wide to be bridged in a day. A few made an honest effort to cross over it, and the men seemed pathetically grateful to them. Others took orders from the sailors for the same reason that the sailors had once taken orders from them—they were afraid to do otherwise. Some were merely biding their time, convinced that the topsy-turvy order would change and they would come into their “own” again. But one thing was evident here as elsewhere in Russia: that, whatever happens, nobody’s “own” will ever again be quite what it has been in the past.

Admiral Verderevsky, the Minister of Marine, said that discipline was destroyed at its root not at the moment of the Revolution, but long before; that new and democratic forms should have been created long ago; and that it could never be restored by the lash or the guillo-

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tine. Verderevsky blamed former Minister of War Goutchkoff for lack of discipline in the navy.

"He called me a pessimist," said Verderevsky. "He told me the fleet was bad, but the army magnificent. If my pessimism had been interpreted differently then, we should have had a new discipline this autumn."

Before the committee adjourned, on the afternoon of our visit, they puzzled their heads over many problems of discipline; and the young secretary, Theodore Averitchkin, who took us to the Sailors' Club, shook his head seriously as he unfolded the difficulties.

"Instruction is what we need," he said, as we drove through the spick-and-span streets of tidy little Helsingfors. "When the people got freedom, they forgot that they had not learned for three hundred years, and the masses who did n't know anything understood freedom in their own way. The people who should educate us sit back and call us traitors. We are not traitors—it is bourgeois lying that is spread all over Europe about us. Tolstoy said that calumny was like a snowball, gathering snow as it rolls, and

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becoming bigger and bigger. Only those who are without honor can say that we are traitors. They forget the hundreds of our comrades who are in the grave of the Baltic Sea. There are not, and there never will be, traitors in the Baltic Fleet. Why don't the people who talk so much about traitors come and give us some instruction? They don't want to part with their fine automobiles and beautiful women. We are not asking for palaces and automobiles. We are asking only that all shall have a chance to learn and enough to eat."

Averitchkin spoke with the burning ardor of a convinced propagandist, and there was no doubt of his sincerity.

The Sailors' Club was a distinct surprise. I expected to see the usual Russian meeting-place: a big, stuffy, barnlike hall with a litter of dirt and cigarette stubs underfoot. Instead, we drew up before a five-story building, and six husky, clear-eyed sailor boys opened the door and welcomed us into the lobby of a first-class hotel. There were velvet carpets underfoot, cut-glass chandeliers overhead, palms and bay trees stationed at correct intervals, and not even the ghost

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of a cigarette stub in sight. The easy-chairs were filled with men in sailors' uniforms, talking comfortably in small groups. In the dining-rooms others were gathered around little tables with snowy linen and shining silver.

The head commissariat led the way, beaming with pride over my compliments. As we went from place to place, he explained that the club belonged to all the sailors of the world, and that any man would find a welcome there. There were ten thousand active members, and the men on shore leave spent most of their time there. Meals were served at cost, and the organization was run like any millionaires' club to cater to the comforts of its members. In the days before the Revolution no sailor would have been allowed in such a building. Now the place was swarming with them, and they graced it as to the manner born.

The bourgeois feared and hated the sailor most of all the revolutionists; but he was the cleanest, staunchest, finest-looking man I found in revolutionary Russia. There was real stamina here. He knew what he wanted, and was determined to get it. War-weariness played little

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part in his psychology. He was willing to fight Germans, if he believed Germans to be the enemies of revolution. Six hundred of him formed a volunteer battalion of death and went to the Riga front to fight with the soldiers in the trenches, and the battalion was practically annihilated.

If the majority of the Russian sailors could have been convinced that to save Free Russia they must fight Germany, they would have fought. When the actual existence of their vessels was threatened, as it was in the Gulf of Riga in September, they did fight. Patriotism for their Revolution and pride in ownership of their fleet were uppermost. The first question the sailors on the *Respublica* asked Mr. Williams was:

“Are the American ships as clean as this?”

CHAPTER X

THE RISE OF THE PROLETARIAT

WINTER and the Bolsheviki came to Russia on the same chill breeze, and each brought a strange new world.

Late one afternoon in early November, I walked through the gray streets of Petrograd, and shivered. It was not cold as the thermometer speaks, but cold as a room where death awaits a tardy undertaker—desolate, ugly, forbidding. Autumn was already dead, and the burial long overdue.

The last copper-colored leaf had been stripped from the trees and trampled in the dust some days since. The gray trunks of the birches were nude, and conscious of it. The city was wrapped in a futile cloak of fog, too thin to hide its nakedness, and every barren shrub and battered cornice pleaded with delayed winter to cover its shame.

I turned my face away from the Summer Garden, and walked quickly past. A million years

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had passed since that spring day, six months before, when the sparrows occupied themselves with house-building in the green leaves, and Vera and Ivan on the benches below devoted themselves to castle-building.

Death was in the air. At that moment I hated the city, which I had come to love as one loves a naughty child for all its faults and virtues, its hopes, passions, potentialities, and failures—for the sum of its stormy, troubled self.

I hurried back to my blue-and-white room, drew the curtains, turned on all the lights, and curled up on the couch to bury myself in a book of verse and shut it out.

The next afternoon at three o'clock I reached for the desk telephone to call the American consul. There was no answer. I pushed the hook up and down, tempting fate in the shape of an irate operator; but it produced no response.

"Has it come?" I asked myself, and laughed at the question. It had been the current one in Petrograd for weeks. Every time the electric light failed, the water was turned off, or some one banged a door or dropped a block of wood, Petro-

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grad jumped automatically to the same conclusion: it has come!

I put down the receiver, straightened the papers on my desk, and started for the censor's office. A new sentry was pacing up and down outside the hotel. On the Morskaya, in the block below, the armored car in the courtyard of the telephone exchange had moved nearer the sidewalk, and was flaunting its guns ominously at the passing throng.

I hurried on, bent upon getting my letters ready for the weekly express. Mr. Novometzky, the kindly censor, who softened one's heart to the whole tribe of blue-pencilers, shook his head despairingly when I entered.

"Well, it has come," he said. "There is trouble again. These are bad times for poor Russia."

I left him, and walked briskly toward the Nevsky on the trail of a possible courier who would carry my mail across the world to San Francisco. At the Moika a crowd had gathered around a big limousine. Three soldiers held a brief parley with the chauffeur, then one of them climbed into the vacant seat beside him. Farther down the

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street another car was stopped, then another, and another.

I dined that night with a French aviator, and afterward we stood in the lobby and watched a Battalion of Death file through the whirling door and encamp on the marble floor.

At ten o'clock we wandered into the black streets. The Nevsky was quiet. The Palace square was almost deserted. Along the Neva, at the entrance to each of the bridges, a group of soldiers crowded around a log fire. Here and there in the center of the circle was a small boy, thrilling as small boys do the world over at the lateness of the hour, the bigness of his companions, and the adventure of the moment. A few steps away from each of these groups was a wagon filled with ammunition.

Back in the hotel, I met Baron B., whose title, estates, and sympathies were all bound up in the hope of a return of the monarchy.

"Well, we have got them on the run this time," he said.

Only a week before I had sat next to him at a dinner where, before my amazed eyes, they toasted the Tsar and sang the old tabooed na-

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tional anthem. Our host, an Englishman, had introduced the baron as a great officer and an absolutely fearless human being.

“He helped to stop the retreat from Tarnopol on the southwestern front after the July offensive,” he said. “You ought to have seen him lining up those deserters before the firing squad. He made quick work of the bloody cowards.”

I urged the baron to tell me of his experiences, and shuddered as I listened. He had nothing but contempt for Kerensky, his commander-in-chief, and was eager for his downfall. His only fear was that the Soviet would not take over the government.

“Two weeks of the Bolsheviki, and we will be able to lick these people into shape,” he said. “The worse things get, the sooner they will be willing to listen to reason. You don’t know the Russians.”

“We’ve got them on the run this time”—what could it mean? No good to Kerensky, I was sure—no ultimate good to the masses of the Russian people, if Baron B. could have his way.

There was nothing in the situation that night that augured well for Kerensky’s government.

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He was like a man poised on a tight-rope. The cry, "All power to the Soviet!" grew louder and more insistent with every passing hour. The Russian workers, the youngest proletarian group in the world, were the most class-conscious and determined, and—they had guns.

The fleet was Bolshevik—I had no doubt of that. The Petrograd garrison was Bolshevik. Every report from the front indicated that the men in the trenches had swung farther and farther to the left. The land and peace hunger clamored for immediate satisfaction.

Kerensky, trying like the true democrat he was to please every one, succeeded in pleasing no one. He had lost touch with the masses. Attacked from above and below, from within and without, there seemed little hope for him. Those who should have been behind him, with every energy and influence they possessed, were secretly willing his downfall, and some of them were plotting to bring it about. Individual members of the Allied military missions, still clinging to the old belief that Russia could be saved by a man on horseback, in spite of the Korniloff fiasco, were meeting behind closed doors, where they dis-

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cussed, not the way to save Kerensky, but the way to put a dictator in his place. The names of Korniloff and Savinkoff were again bandied about where ever two or three military men were gathered together.

Poor Kerensky! Too big, and not big enough. Any one of his problems was a man-sized job. He was packing the load of a broken industrial and economic machine, inherited from the régime of the Tsar, a corrupt, inefficient, and disloyal bureaucracy, and a betrayed and disillusioned army. His uncomprehending military partners, the Allies, were urging the impossible, and refusing to grant the demand of the Russian masses for a statement of war aims and a publication of the secret treaties, without which Kerensky could no longer hold the faith of his followers.

Dark forces of the old order were working with German intriguers to augment the chaos, and above and beyond and beneath everything was the honest cry of the people for "Peace to the world!" and "Land to the peasants!"

The Bolsheviki promised peace and land. They promised more: they promised that the

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workers of the world should "arise and put a stop to war and capitalistic exploitation forever."

They were dreaming big dreams in Russia that night; scheming big schemes; and they were not unaware that the dreams and schemes would be used in the future by the rest of the world, perhaps as patterns by which to model, perhaps only as horrible examples and tragic warnings.

It was an hour in which one needed all of one's faith to believe that the human march is forward, no matter how many members of the family are lost on the way.

At daybreak a company of Red Guards from the Viborg factory district—men whose only military equipment was a rifle slung over the shoulder, and a conviction that the hour of the proletariat had come, and that they were the defenders of the cause of the workers of the world—came to a halt on the north bank of the Neva. The bridges were guarded by cadets from the Engineers' School, placed there the night before, when Kerensky had ordered them opened. At the point of their guns, the factory workers ordered the officers to close them again. The engineers obeyed, and the street-cars started blithely

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on their way back and forth across the river, just as if nothing had happened.

At the same moment, two detachments of Bolshevik soldiers and sailors, acting under orders from the Military Revolutionary Committee, took possession of the telephone exchange and the General Staff. It was all done so swiftly and so quietly that the Bolshevik battle was half won before Petrograd awoke to the knowledge that civil war was on.

It was nine o'clock when Petroff brought me tea and word that the Bolsheviki had that minute taken possession of the hotel. Petroff's astounding news sent me hurriedly into the hall, and into the arms of a squad of soldiers. The young officer in command detained me.

"Amerikanka Korrespondent," I explained, and indicated a desire to go downstairs.

"Pazhal'sta, pazhal'sta!" he said, bowing low, and motioning his men to let me pass.

At the head of the winding staircase groups of frightened women were gathered, searching the marble lobby below with troubled eyes. Nobody seemed to know what had happened. The Battalion of Death had walked out in the night, with-

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out firing so much as a single shot. Each floor was crowded with soldiers and Red Guardsmen, who went from room to room, searching for arms, and arresting officers suspected of anti-Bolshevik sympathies. The landings were guarded by sentries, and the lobby was swarming with men in faded uniforms. Two husky, bearded peasant soldiers were stationed behind the counter, and one in the cashier's office kept watch over the safe. Two machine-guns poked their ominous muzzles through the entry-way. My letter of credit was inside the safe, and the only other money I had was an uncashed check for eight hundred rubles.

I started for the National City Bank on the slender chance of finding it open. I was just in time. Within the hour the Bolsheviki captured the State Bank, and all the others promptly closed their doors.

On my way back I walked through the Dvortsovy Square. Four armored cars were drawn up under the shadow of the mighty granite shaft in front of the Winter Palace, their guns pointing significantly at the palace windows. Flaming red flags were freshly painted on their gray

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sides, and on one in large letters was the word "Proletariat." A crowd of perhaps twenty mechanics and chauffeurs tinkered with guns and engines, making ready for instant action. Occasionally a man looked up from the nut he was tightening to offer some comment on the situation. The whereabouts of Kerensky was the chief topic of the moment.

"He is not there now," said one of them, pointing with his wrench in the direction of the palace. "He ran away to Finland in the night."

"He is not in Finland," said another scornfully. "He went away to get troops. He is coming back to fight us."

"They say he escaped to the front disguised as a Red Cross nurse," said a third, with a sneer that produced a loud burst of laughter from his companions.

Inside the palace, seated around the mahogany table in the great council chamber, where the Tsar of all the Russias had spoken commands that made an empire tremble, fifteen members of the Provisional Government grimly waited. In the hall outside the door ten military school cadets kept watch. These, the women's regi-

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ment, and a company of cadets encamped on the lower floor, were all that stood between them and the rising army of the workers. To them the whereabouts of Kerensky was no secret. He had gone in search of loyal troops who would rise to the protection of the Provisional Government, and upon his success or failure they must stand or fall.

It was noon when I returned to St. Isaac's Square. The Marinsky Palace, where the Council of the Republic was meeting,—once the home of the Council of the Empire, mouth-piece of absolutism in old Russia,—was surrounded by sailors, soldiers, and Red Guardsmen. The palace guards offered no resistance when a crowd of sailors demanded admission. They swarmed through the entrances, and appeared simultaneously in various parts of the hall. A sailor, a tam-o'-shanter on the back of his head and long ribbon streamers flying out behind, stepped up to President Avksentieff.

"Stop talking. Go home," he said. "There is no Council of the Republic!"

Avksentieff and his followers demurred for a moment; then, looking around the room at the

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men in blue, they adjourned, and filed into the square. The Council of the Republic, hope of Tseretelli, Cheidze, and those other moderate Socialists who were trying so desperately to stave off the final break, was at an end.

The more radical Socialist members went to Smolney Institute, where the delegates from all parts of Russia were flocking to the second All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

At three o'clock I started for Smolney, a little old revolutionist whom we Americans all called "Daddy R.," trotting beside me. We walked down the Morskaya toward the telephone exchange. Just opposite we halted. Coming toward us, in regular marching formation, was a company of military cadets, strapping, handsome fellows from the officers' school. Before they reached the building, the commander halted them. Half of the number walked deliberately past the armored car, turned, and approached from the other side. A volley of rifle fire broke the stillness, and the crowd scurried to the cover of doorways and side streets. A gray-bearded, benevolent-looking *dvornik* dragged me inside a courtyard, where a dozen other people sought

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shelter, and clanged the great iron door shut behind us. A beggar, with legs cut off at the knees, hobbled beside me.

"*Crack! Crack!*" went the rifles again—then a moment of breathless silence. The *dvornik* cautiously opened the door a few inches, and I put my head out. The street was deserted. The cadets were crouched in kneeling positions on the sidewalks against the wall, guns pointing at the telephone office.

The *dvornik* pushed the door shut again, and this time he locked it and motioned us to follow. We crossed a courtyard, and turned into a dark, narrow tunnel, through which we picked our way over piles of debris and up and down stone steps till we came into the open a block below.

By another route Daddy R. and I made our way back to the Morskaya. I stepped to the middle of the street to see what was happening, but a Russian officer motioned me away.

"They will fire again in a minute," he said. "They are trying to take the telephone exchange from the Bolsheviks."

He had no sooner finished speaking than the front of the building began to belch lead in a

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shower that sent the cadets hurrying in search of shelter. An armored car hove in sight from the opposite direction, opened fire, and completed the rout of the attacking force.

We hurried toward the Nevsky. The bridge across the Moika was bristling with guns. Four armored cars barred the way, and a crowd of soldiers and sailors worked rapidly, throwing up a barricade across the street. One man was stretched flat on the wooden pavement; prepared to fire a machine-gun from the protection of a telegraph-pole. The Red Guards waved the passengers back from the bridge, but the tracks were left open, and the cars went back and forth unhindered. We tried to make our way through the old France Hotel, which wanders all over the block between the Morskaya and the Moika, and out on to the canal by another entrance. Again we were turned back. Another volley of gunshot sent us scurrying to the shelter of a basement shop.

It was nearly five when we reached the entrance of Smolney. The great building, until a few months before a private seminary where the feminine flower of Russian aristocracy was culti-

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vated in seclusion, had suddenly become an arsenal, bristling with guns and swarming with armed men.

Upstairs the Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies were gathering for the Congress of Soviets. They were coming together to decide whether the Bolshevik demand of "All power to the Soviets" should be granted. It was a question already being answered by the voice of the guns.

The meeting was to open at five. At nine the crowd in the great, chaste white assembly room was still waiting for action. Outside, in the dimly lighted corridors, hundreds of men with muddy boots tramped back and forth, in and out of committee rooms. Soon after nine, a delegate from the Menshevik group announced that his party was still in caucus, unable to come to an agreement, and asked for another hour's delay. A murmur of disapproval ran through the room. Nerves were at trigger-tension. For once, Russian patience seemed to be about to reach its limit.

Another hour passed. Suddenly through the windows opening on the Neva came a steady *boom! boom! boom!*

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"What's that? What's that?" asked the sailor of the soldier, and the soldier of the workman.

A man with pale face and blazing eyes fought his way through the crowd on to the platform.

"The cruiser *Aurora* is shelling our comrades in the Winter Palace. We demand that this bloodshed shall be stopped instantly!" he shouted.

"It's a lie!" said one of them.

"It's just another trick of the bourgeois to divide our forces!" said a second.

A few men hurried from the hall; but the crowd had received too many startling rumors that day to be much disturbed by another one.

Again came the *boom! boom! boom!* from the direction of the Neva. Again the murmur of question.

"It's a motor-lorry cranking up in the courtyard below," some one ventured.

"The people upstairs are moving tables around," another suggested.

That moment the attention of the crowd was diverted by the arrival of a man of medium height, square-shouldered, lean, dark, and tense-looking. His face was white, and his black hair brushed

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back from a wide forehead, black mustache, and small black beard, his black jacket and flowing black tie, still further emphasized the alabaster whiteness of his skin. He stood within a few feet of me, one hand in his pocket, and with sharp, quick glances took the measure of that strange sea of faces.

“Here’s Trotsky!” whispered the man beside me. “Come, I want you to meet him.”

Before I had time to acquiesce or protest, I found a lean hand grasping mine in a strong, characteristic handshake. We stood there for a few moments, talking of inconsequential things, but all of us charged with the tensivity of the hour. There was keen intelligence here, nerve, a certain uncompromising streak of iron, a sense of power; yet I little suspected I was talking to the man whose name within a few brief weeks would be a familiar word on every tongue—the most-talked-of human being in an age of spectacular figures.

At twenty minutes to eleven our conversation was abruptly cut short by the appearance of Dan, who opened the meeting. It was Dan’s swan-song. Only a few weeks before, in this

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gathering, his voice would have been law; but with the swing of the workers to the left his power was gone. The mass had broken with its leaders, and every comment from the crowd indicated more definitely the irrevocability of that break.

Dan announced that he would not make a speech, declaring that the hour in which his comrades were being shelled in the Winter Palace, and self-sacrificingly sticking to their posts, was not the hour for oratory. He said that five hundred and thirteen delegates had been seated, and the new presidium of twenty-five members would contain fourteen Bolsheviki.

The spokesmen of the various parties then announced the names of their representatives. Leaders of the social patriotic groups, of the Mensheviki, and Socialist Revolutionists refused to take their place in the presidium, and the Menshevik Internationalists declared they would delay joining the presidium until certain questions were settled.

The Bolsheviki, with Nicolai Lenin and Zenovieff at their head, climbed to the platform. A great cheer went up from the Bolshevik supporters. Lenin and Zenovieff, who had been in hid-

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ing since the July riots, had that day come out of their holes to take a historic part in this new Revolution.

When the ovation had died down, Dan briefly stated the object of the meeting before relinquishing his place to Trotzky.

"The business of the Convention," said he, "divides itself into three heads: a governmental crisis, the question of war and peace, and the Constituent Assembly."

"Take up the question of peace first," shouted a soldier in the crowd.

It was all that was needed to set the indignation of the Mensheviki flaming.

"Tavarischi, forty minutes have passed since we announced that our comrades were being shelled in the Winter Palace, and the cruiser *Aurora* is still firing. We demand that this bloodshed be stopped immediately."

"A committee has already been sent out," some one else declared.

Martoff, perhaps the ablest of the Menshevik Internationalists, took the platform, and in a voice ringing with indignation demanded immediate settlement of the governmental crisis.

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“If this convention wants to be the voice of revolutionary democracy, it must not sit idly by before the rapidly developing civil war that may result in a disastrous explosion of the counter-revolution,” he said. “When the question of the organization of the government is being settled by the conspiracy of a single one of the revolutionary parties, we are challenged by only one problem; the immediate warding off of this impending civil war.”

He proposed the appointment of a committee for negotiating with other Socialist parties and organizations to stop the rapidly developing clash.

The resolution was passed; but, instead of immediately appointing a committee, Trotzky permitted the convention to listen to the opinions of delegate after delegate on a number of subjects not pertaining to the question.

It was a critical moment in the history of the Russian Revolution. Perhaps it was some bitter memory of insults he had suffered at the hands of these other leaders, perhaps it was simply the natural inability of the Russian to compromise, or a combination of these and other motives, that

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made Trotzky delay action, and thereby toss away his opportunity for compromise. Probably even he himself could not say.

Meanwhile the guns on the Neva continued their eloquent *boom! boom! boom!*

Kharash, a delegate from the Twelfth Army, got the floor.

“While a proposition for peaceful settlement is being introduced here, a battle goes on in the streets of Petrograd,” he said. “The Winter Palace is being shelled. The specter of civil war is rising. The Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionists repudiate all that is going on here, and stubbornly resist all attempts to seize the government.”

“He does not represent the Twelfth Army!” cried a soldier from the ranks. “The army demands all power to the Soviets.”

Twenty others were on their feet the same instant:

“Staff! Staff! He comes from the Staff! He is not a soldier!” they shouted angrily, shaking their fists at the delegate from the Twelfth.

Pandemonium broke loose. The shouts of the men inside the building drowned the boom

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of the guns outside. In the midst of it a man demanded and got the floor.

"We are leaving the convention," he said. "We can stand no more! We are going unarmed to die with our comrades in the Winter Palace."

A hush fell over the crowd. It was broken only by the sound of shuffling feet as the speaker led the way to the door, followed by a hundred or more of the conservative revolutionists, who filed quietly out.

At midnight, with three fellow correspondents, I left the atmosphere of that memorable meeting, gray with smoke and charged with battle, and went in search of passes that would permit me to go to the Winter Palace.

CHAPTER XI

THE FALL OF THE WINTER PALACE

HOWEVER much the rest of Petrograd talked that night, there was one spot in the storm-tossed city where no words were wasted. This was the office of the Voina Revoliutsiony Komitet (Military Revolutionary Committee), sprung suddenly and quietly into an existence shrouded in deep mystery.

Alex Gomberg, Russian product of New York's East Side, with an American habit of providing against emergencies, suggested that it would be useless to attempt to get through the Bolshevik lines without a pass from this committee. Gomberg, odd little bundle of materialism and idealism, who had a deep love for the country of his adoption which his scoffing cynicism could not hide, never lost a chance to do a good turn to America or Americans. Though he could not resist the home call of revolution, he said he would rather be a messenger-boy in

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New York than President of Russia. As a friend of Trotzky, known to the members of the all-powerful committee, he undertook to arrange the necessary permits.

He led the way down the dimly lighted corridor to the farther end. A young fair-haired boy met us in an outer office, took our names and request, and disappeared into the next room, shutting the door behind him. We stared curiously after him. Beyond that door were the men who were directing the siege and capture of Petrograd—directing it so efficiently that in the days that followed, the enemies of the Bolsheviki insisted the committee was composed of Germans, because Russians were incapable of such perfect organization.

When the inside door opened again the fair-haired boy reappeared with the passes in his hand. Mine was typewritten on a bit of paper torn from a scratch-pad, numbered "Five," and stated simply:

"The Military Revolutionary Committee of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies allows Miss Bessie Beatty free passage all over the city."

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That scrap of paper was to prove the open sesame to many closed doors before the gray dawn of morning. It bore the blue seal of the committee, the only signature capable of commanding the slightest sign of respect from a Russian bayonet that night.

The Smolney Institute is excellently located to provide seclusion for a young women's seminary, but in the middle of a cold night it seemed a long dark way from anywhere. Walking down the stairs, we speculated upon the improbability of finding an *izvostchik* abroad at such an hour.

Down in the courtyard a huge motor-truck was cranking up for departure. Its only occupants were three sailors, a young Cossack soldier with a cape of shaggy black fur that hung to his heels, and a Red Guardsman. We hailed them, and Mr. Gomberg shouted a request to be taken to town. It was drowned by the sound of the engine. He repeated it in louder tones. The sailor looked dubiously at me and at Louise Bryant, the other woman member of the party.

"It's a dangerous trip," he said. "We are going out to distribute proclamations, and we are almost certain to be shot at."

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We looked at one another for a moment, considered that it was probably our only chance to reach the Winter Palace, and asked to be allowed to take the risk. Two strong hands came over the side to pull me up, and two sailors sitting on a board across the body of the truck arose to give us their seats. They held a hurried consultation, then asked us to stand again. They had decided that this exposed position would be too dangerous for women. The Cossack lad in the shaggy cape spread some proclamations on the floor of the car.

"Sit here," he said, "and when the shooting begins you can lie flat on your backs and keep your heads low."

A bundle of rifles lay on the floor under my knees, and as we started off over the cobbles I grabbed a chain and held fast to keep from being bumped out. The streets were like black cañons. Apparently there was not a human being abroad; yet every time the sailor tossed a handful of white leaflets into the air, men came darting mysteriously from doorways and courtyards to catch them.

The Cossack towered above me, rifle in hand,

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with eyes searching the dark for signs of danger. At the street intersections we slowed up, and groups of soldiers gathered around the bonfires crowded close to the truck for news from Smolney. They peered with curious and startled eyes into our unexpected faces, then hurried back to the circle of light around the blazing birch-wood logs. During one of these pauses Mr. Gomberg grabbed a proclamation and read it to us:

"TO RUSSIAN CITIZENS

"The power has gone over to the organ of the Petrograd Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies, the War Revolutionary Committee, which is at the head of the Petrograd proletariat and garrison.

"The cause for which the people strive: immediate democratic peace, abolition of *pomieschik* property on land, workmen's control, the creation of a Soviet government—this business is done.

"Long live the Revolution of workmen, soldiers, and peasants.

"WAR REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE."

It was one by the clock in the steeple of the Nicolaievski Station when we turned into the Nevsky. The great circle was deserted. Earlier in the day there had been fighting here, but no trace of it was visible now.

"Put your heads down!" the Cossack ordered,

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catching sight of a group of unidentified men ahead.

We obeyed; but when they proved to be Bolshevik soldiers and Red Guardsmen, we peeped cautiously out again. At the bridge across the Moika Canal we were turned back by the barricade erected early in the afternoon, and by the command of the guard, who said there was firing just ahead and no one could pass. From the direction of the Winter Palace came the occasional *boom!* of a big gun, followed by the short, sharp crack of the rifles.

Reluctantly we retraced our way. In front of the Kazan Cathedral the guards again ordered us to halt. In the darkness across the wide street, we saw a crowd of black figures lined up in marching order against the curb. We had come suddenly upon that little band of men and women who left Smolney to make a demonstration of passive resistance and die with their comrades at the Winter Palace. They had been joined by the Mayor of Petrograd, members of the City Duma, and the Jewish Bund. There were four or five hundred of them in all, and

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here, within a few blocks of their destination, they had been stopped.

In that crowd were many of the men and women who had been the firebrands of Russia, the Socialist revolutionists, the terrorists, who were quietly walking forth to oppose themselves unarmed to the force of these new revolutionists who, to their way of thinking, were murdering the cause of Russian freedom for which most of them had suffered years of imprisonment and the unspeakable hardships of exile in Siberia. Here and there in the crowd was a young officer or a cluster of students; but more of them were veterans who had grown gray in the service of revolution, and their faces were grim and set.

Standing a few feet away was a squad of soldiers. The commissaire in command of them raised his hand.

"We have orders from the Military Revolutionary Committee to let you go no farther," he said.

A murmur ran through the crowd. The gray-haired veterans of the old days began to argue, and students and officers joined their entreaties.

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The soldiers remained obdurate.

"What will you do if we go anyway?" asked Mayor Schreider of Petrograd. "Will you shoot us?"

"No," replied the commissaire. "We have orders not to shoot you. But we have orders not to let you pass."

He gave a quick command to his men, who fell back a distance of fifty feet and lined up across the Nevsky. They formed a solid human wall, stretching across the wide street from curb to curb. A block below there was another and yet more formidable wall composed of Red Guardsmen. The demonstrators looked at those husky young soldiers, and turned away in dismay.

"If we go forward," said a gray-haired terrorist, once expert in the use of dynamite, "some one will be killed, and they will blame it on the switchman. They will say it was a case of mistaken orders, and no good will come to any one. We will go back, and try to persuade them to stop the slaughter."

In regular marching order they departed as they had come—a sad and solemn procession,

**Отъ Военно-Револуціоннаго Комитета при Петроградскомъ Совѣтѣ
Рабочихъ и Солдатскихъ Депутатовъ.**

Къ Гражданамъ Россіи.

Временное Правительство низложено. Государственная власть перешла въ руки органа Петроградскаго Совѣта Рабочихъ и Солдатскихъ Депутатовъ Военно-Револуціоннаго Комитета, стоящаго во главѣ Петроградскаго пролетаріата и гарнизона.

Дѣла, за которое боролся народъ: немедленное предложение демократическаго мира, отмена помѣщичьей собственности на землю, рабочій контроль надъ производствомъ, созданіе Совѣтскаго Правительства — это дѣло обезпечено.

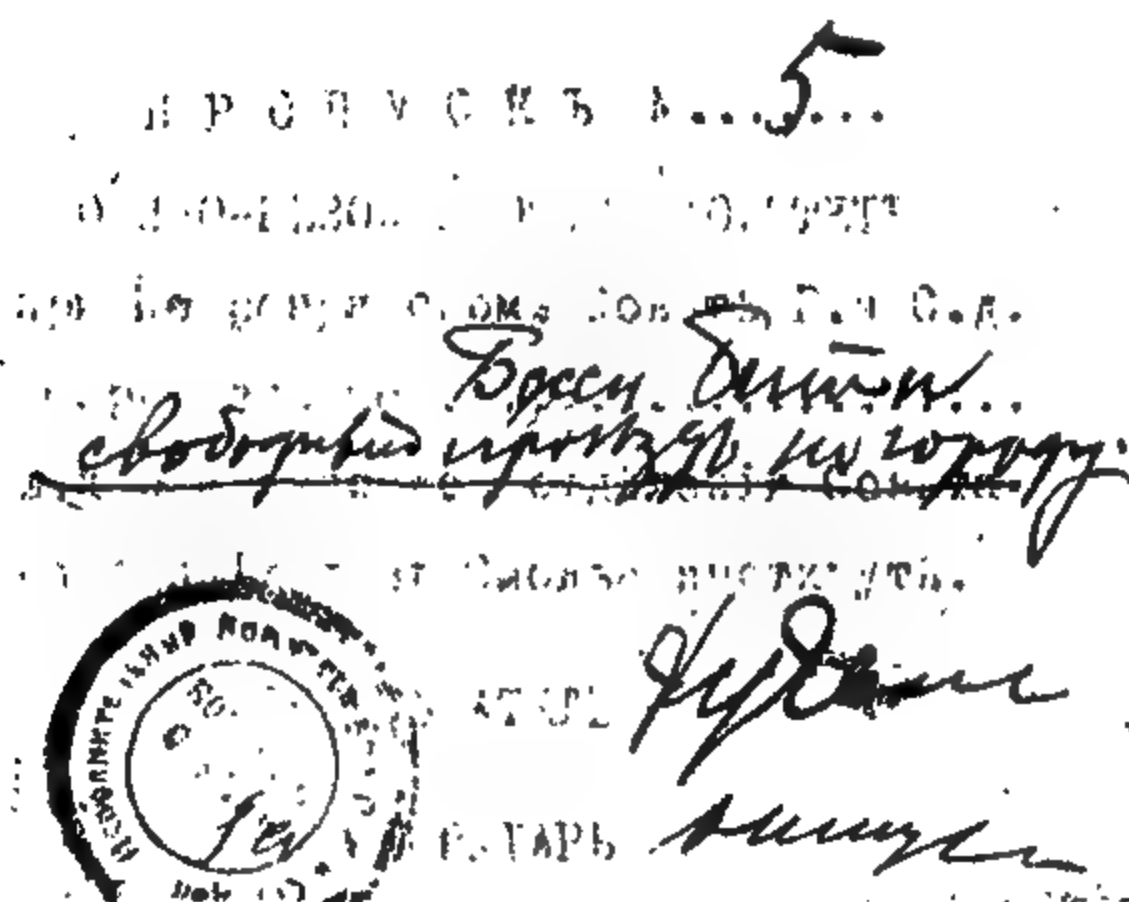
**ДА ЗДРАВСТВУЕТЪ РЕВОЛЮЦІЯ РАБОЧИХЪ, СОЛДАТЪ
И КРЕСТЬЯНЪ**

**Военно-Револуціонный Комитетъ
при Петроградскомъ Совѣтѣ
Рабочихъ и Солдатскихъ Депутатовъ.**

20 октября 1917 г. 10 ч. утра.

The proclamation of the Military Revolutionary Committee announcing the fall of the Kerensky government, distributed in Petrograd while the guns of the cruiser Aurora were hammering the Winter Palace

Women soldiers in their last stand before the Winter Palace



The pass which permitted the author safe conduct through the Bolshevik lines

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helpless in the face of this new, strange thing upsetting all their preconceived ideas of revolution.

We watched them go; then, anxious to press on, we presented our passes to the commissaire of soldiers, who motioned us forward with a "Pazhal'sta!" The wall broke, and we passed through without a word. The blue seal of the Military Revolutionary Committee had done for us what eloquence and argument could not do for the old revolutionists.

At the Moika the Red Guard halted us. Our passes made no appeal here. We looked suspiciously like bourgeois on the way to the Winter Palace, and must not be allowed to pass. We argued, and they discussed the advisability of arresting us. The idea did not especially appeal, so we retraced our steps to the Kazan Cathedral and the friendly commissaire. He detailed a man with special orders to take us through the lines to the Winter Palace.

Again the factory men with rifles slung over their shoulders regarded us with suspicion; but they took the word of the soldier and finally permitted us to pass.

It was quarter of three when we halted in the

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shadow of the great red arch and peered cautiously out into the dark square. There was a moment of silence; then three rifle shots shattered the quiet. We stood speechless, awaiting a return volley; but the only sound was the crunching of broken glass spread like a carpet over the cobblestones. The windows of the Winter Palace had been broken into bits.

Suddenly a sailor emerged from the black.

"It's all over!" he said. "They have surrendered."

We picked our way across the glass-strewn square, climbed the barricade erected that afternoon by the defenders of the Winter Palace, and followed the conquering sailors and Red Guardsmen into the mammoth building of dingy red stucco. On the strength of our blue-sealed passes, they permitted us to enter unquestioned. A commissaire of sailors motioned us to a bench beside the wall. A squad of sailors mounted the stairs to the council chamber, and placed the Provisional Government under arrest. Above us we could hear the sound of doors being broken open, while a searching squad went from room to room looking for hidden prisoners.

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The rifles taken from the military cadets were stacked in a heap in the hall, and a solid line of victorious sailors filed in and out of the palace. The desire for souvenirs, trophies of the hour, seemed to have seized them; but the palace apparently offered little choice. One sailor came down the stairs with a coat-hanger in his hand, and another carried a sofa cushion. The best a third could find was a candle. The commissaire stopped them at the door.

"No, no, tavarisch!" he said, holding out his hand. "Pazhal'sta, pazhal'sta, you must take nothing from here."

He talked to them in a patient, reasonable tone, as one would speak to a child, and like children they gave up their plunder. One man, a soldier who had taken a blanket, protested.

"But I am cold," he said.

"I can't help it, tavarisch. If you take that, they will say we came to loot. And we did not come for loot: we came for revolution."

At that moment there was a clatter on the stairs, and I turned to see the members of the Provisional Government file slowly down. Konovaloff, vice-president of the Cabinet and Minis-

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ter of Trade and Industry, came first. Tretia-koff of Moscow, president of the Economic Council, followed. Behind him was the tall, dark, slender, handsome figure of the young Foreign Minister, Tereshchenko, who cast an amazed glance in my direction as he passed. Next in line came the little, frail, gray figure of Kishkin, Minister of Public Welfare, and after him two military men in uniform, General Manikovsky, Acting Minister of War, and General Borisoff. Among the others were practically all the remaining members of the Kerensky Cabinet.

Some of them walked with defiant step and heads held high. Some were pale, worn, and anxious. One or two seemed utterly crushed and broken. The strain of that day of anxious waiting, and that night under the capricious guns of the cruiser *Aurora*, coupled with the weeks when Cabinet crisis had followed Cabinet crisis, had proved too much for them.

They marched silently off across the square, and headed for the Fortress of Peter and Paul, rising grimly out of the darkness beyond the Neva.

I sat there silently watching them go, and won-

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dering what this night's work would mean in the future of Russia and the world. The *commis-saire* who had motioned us to the seat indicated that we might now go upstairs, and we passed quickly to the council chamber. We made our way through the shattered rooms, blazing now with a million lights from the twinkling crystal chandeliers. The silk curtains hung in shreds, and here and there on the walls was the ugly scar of a recent bullet. On the whole, the destruction was much less than we had expected to find it. The attacking force had gone about its work, determined to take the palace, but to take it with as little bloodshed as possible, and in the lulls between storms they had made frequent attempts to break the resistance by fraternization. None of the defenders had been killed, but six of the sailors who had fought in the open square had paid with their lives for their revolutionary ardor, and many others had been wounded.

As we passed the door of Kerensky's office, formerly the study of the last of the Romanoffs, one of the palace care-takers spoke to the two soldiers standing guard outside.

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"Take good care of this," he said. "The library is very valuable."

Later, Mr. Gomberg, anxious to test the guard, presented a pass and asked for admission.

"I am sorry," said one of the soldiers, "but this pass is not good here. No one can enter this room to-night."

Nicholas II, who only a few months before had sat behind the sealed door, was sleeping in exile on the edge of a Siberian swamp. Kerensky, his successor, was spending the night hours in a desperate effort to reach the front and rally the troops to prevent the very thing that had just happened. I recalled, with a little sigh of regret, that this day in this very spot I was to have lunched with the Minister-President of Russia.

In one of the rooms where we lingered for a few moments, looking curiously about us, a crowd of soldiers had gathered, and they were talking together excitedly. I noticed them, and once I caught the proletarian word of scorn, "Bourgeoisie!" But it never occurred to me that we could be the object of their discussion. Suddenly a young *commissaire* came up to us.

"These men can not understand," he said, "who

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you are, and why you are here. They are quite excited and angry about it. They think perhaps you may have come to rob. I told them I would question you, and if you had no right to be here we would arrest you."

We presented our passes. He examined them, and turned to the men, who were by this time quite obviously casting unfriendly glances in our direction.

"Tavarischi," he said, "these passes are stamped, just as my own is, with the blue seal. See it! You may be sure that if they had not the right they would not be here with this."

The men examined the paper quizzically, and nodded. They took an informal vote upon the subject, and it was agreed that we should be allowed to go free.

A few minutes later we followed them down the stairs and out of the palace, the last people to leave except for the guards who were detailed to remain on duty. The next day a decree was passed making the mammoth red building a people's museum, that it might be preserved from ever again becoming a point of dispute in political conflicts.

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I did not see the women soldiers. They were in another wing of the palace. The following morning the city rang with stories of their abuse; but in the investigation that was made by Madame Torkova, one of the leaders of the Petrograd Duma, whose inclinations were decidedly anti-Bolshevik, most of these tales were disproved. Some of the women were taken to the headquarters of the Pavlovsky Regiment, and held there until relatives could bring them feminine wearing apparel. A few others, who had no way to obtain this, were allowed to go in their soldiers' uniforms.

From a number of the girls I heard the story of that night. It seems that class feeling had for the moment wiped out every other instinct. As they marched them away in the dark, some of the men, in their excitement, took them by the arms and shook them, shouting:

"Why do you fight us? Why do you go against your own class? You are working-women. Why do you fight with the bourgeoisie and the counter-revolutionists?"

So effective was their propaganda that then, for the first time, a class breach was made in the

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ranks of the women soldiers, and some of them went over to the radicals as completely as any of the men had done.

With the surrender of the Winter Palace, the victory of the Bolsheviki was complete. The dictatorship of the proletariat had become a fact. The only power in Petrograd at dawn that morning was the power of the People's Commissaries, headed by Nicolai Lenin and Leon Trotzky, and backed by the Russian fleet, the bayonets of the Petrograd garrison, and the Red Guard rifles.

Petrograd was stunned. No one had the remotest idea what was going to happen. "Where is Kerensky?" they asked. "Where is Korniloff? Where is Savinkoff? Where are the Cossacks?" Last, and worst of all, "Where are the Germans?"

Rumor was riding a mad steed. All sorts of wild reports swept through the city, but no word of verified fact came from the outside world. That morning the storm center shifted to the city Duma, which refused to acknowledge the victory of the Bolsheviki or accede to their demands. A Committee for the Salvation of the Country and the Revolution was quickly formed, and all

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the anti-Bolshevik groups gathered around it.

Early in the day, a Bolshevik representative called at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and demanded the secret treaties, declaring that he wished to inform the Russian people as to the aims of the war. He was told that ten thousand *dossiers* were to be found in the archives of the ministry, and he was at liberty to examine all of them. He thanked his informant and left.

At the same hour Lenin called at the office of the *Izvestia*, official organ of the executive committee of the Council of Workmen and Soldiers, and announced that it would hereafter be in the hands of the Bolsheviks. He proposed to the editors to continue work under the new leadership. They refused, and Zenovieff, who only a few hours before had been a fugitive, was elevated to the position of chief.

Absolute quiet reigned in the city that day and the next, and such order as Russia had not known since the days immediately following the March Revolution, when the entire populace was lifted into a state of exaltation in which selfish desires played no part. Every soldier had been told that the honor of the new Revolution was in

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his hands. Every member of the Red Guard had been warned that provocation in all the time-tried Russian forms would be used by monarchists, counter-revolutionists, and German agents' to discredit the cause of the workers. They were admonished to refrain from violence themselves, and to prevent looting wherever the slightest indication of it was found. Placards were posted upon the buildings urging precautions against disorder, and soldiers were on patrol duty at every street corner.

By Friday night the Committee of Salvation had succeeded in spreading the strikes in the various ministries until the Bolsheviki were almost completely isolated from the rest of the Russian *intelligentzia*. They made the city ring with stories of outrages—stories that later proved to be a fine fabric of falsification, worthy of Russian imagination. The leaders of the Council of the Republic, the Peasants' Council, and even the Centroflot, Executive Committee of the Russian fleet, called upon the people to refuse to recognize the Soviet government, and announced that before long they would be able to establish a stable government themselves.

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It was a call the people did not heed. The masses had swung away from their leaders. They had their own very definite ideas as to what they wanted. The sailors were protesting violently that the Centralt did not represent the rank and file of the navy, and it was finally dissolved by order of the Military Revolutionary Committee. Soldiers from the ranks were charging their committees with counter-revolution, and shouting with fire in their eyes that their executives were putting off the army elections week after week because they knew they no longer had the faith of the men in the trenches and could not be reelected. The same split had come between the peasants and their executives, and every rumor from the remote corners of Russia indicated that little villages, towns, and cities were following the lead of Petrograd, and rising in massed revolt.

The Bolsheviki had achieved a degree of success greater than they suspected. The leaders, exhausted by lack of sleep, depressed by the rejection of the *Intelligentzia*, and conscious of their inadequacy for the mere physical task of bringing

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bread to keep Petrograd alive, failed utterly to realize their strength. A heavy pall of discouragement settled on Smolney.

Word had come that the Cossacks were marching on the city, and that the citadel of the workers would be attacked the following morning. Petrograd poured out to fight. The factory gates opened wide, and that amazing army of the Red Guard, ununiformed, untrained, and certainly unequipped for battle with the traditional backbone of the Russian military, marched away to defend the "revolutionary capital" and the victory of the proletariat.

Women walked by the side of men, and small boys tagged along on the fringes of the procession. Some of the factory girls wore red crosses upon the sleeves of their thin jackets, and packed a meager kit-bag of bandages and first-aid accessories. More of them carried shovels with which to dig trenches. The fire of the Crusaders was in their eyes, and the faith of the Christian martyrs in their souls, as they marched down the Nevsky, singing as they went, oblivious to the bitter cold that blew in from the Baltic waters,

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and unafraid for the first time of that foe whose very name had been a terror to countless generations of beaten, broken human beings.

At ten o'clock Friday night my telephone rang, and a weary voice came over the wire. It was my Lettish friend, Jacob Peters.

"I am trying to translate something," he said. "It is very important, and I do not know enough English. Could you find time to help me?"

"When?" I asked him.

"Now," he said.

Half an hour later he knocked at my door. His face was gray with fatigue. He had not been in bed for three days, and he looked utterly crushed and discouraged.

"It is the decree of peace to the warring nations of the world," he said. "We are going to send it out on the wireless in every language. They have given me the English translation. We have nobody to help us. It is terrible—there are so few of us who can do this sort of thing."

We sat down at my typewriter, and Peters struggled with the difficult Russian words. Though he could speak Russian, his knowledge of

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the fine points of the language was none too good. He had to translate it first in his own mind into Lettish, and then into English, and his poor, tired brain nearly went mad with the task.

Slowly I took down the words. At the end of an hour the sum of our labors covered half a page of typewriting. We started glibly enough with the title:

THE DECREE OF PEACE

and continued:

The All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies unanimously passed the following decree of peace, October 26–November 8.

The Workmen's and Peasants' Government, made by the Revolution of the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth of October (old style), and sanctioned by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, asks the warring peoples and governments to start negotiations immediately for rightful and democratic peace; for rightful and democratic peace for which the majority of the worn-out, suffering, and war-weary workers are longing in all warring countries; peace for which the peasants and workers of Russia have been persistently asking since they overthrew the monarchy of the Tsar, that is, peace without annexations and contributions and self-definition of nations.

It was only the first paragraph. Peters looked

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despairingly at the long document in front of him, and rubbed his tired eyes.

"I guess it's no use," he said. "We could n't finish it if we worked all night. My Russian is not good enough. If we only had some translators! If we only had some stenographers!"

Here was this new government of the People's Commissaries preparing a document that they confidently hoped would revolutionize the status of the struggling world, and there was no one to translate it but a Lett who had not been to bed for three days, and an American war correspondent.

When Peters got up to leave, he held out his hand.

"This may be the last time I will see you," he said. "If we fail now, everything is lost. Up in my country the business is all in my name—my throat will be the first one cut."

"Well, we have tried, anyway, and if we fail I know the day will come when the world will say that dark Russia did her best to bring peace to all the war-weary peoples!"

CHAPTER XII

THE DAY OF SHAME

SUNDAY, November 11, must go down on the calendar of the red Russian year as a day of shame. On that day there was a sacrifice of the innocents as needless as it was useless, and those responsible were not the military school cadets, nor the soldiers and workmen whom they fought, but a little group of older men who stayed safely beyond the reach of guns and sent mere boys to do their fighting for them.

That the toll of victims was not much greater was due to an American, whose part may still be remembered in Petrograd when the fallen city is risen again.

Shortly before noon Sunday, I was sitting in my room in the War Hotel, wondering at the quiet, broken only by the ringing of the church bells, when two shots abruptly shattered the silence. They were followed by the noise of ex-

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cited voices, and the clatter of many feet in the halls.

I hurried out to the stairs, but an officer turned me back at the first landing.

"They are fighting downstairs—you had better keep to your room," he said.

I retraced my steps, and on the floor above caught the elevator and dropped swiftly down. The lobby was swarming. Soldiers were running about everywhere, men and officers were shouting, and nobody could tell what was happening. I walked to the door in time to see an armored car turn the corner and make for the hotel. Several other people saw it at the same moment, and there was a rush for the stairs. The car came to a halt at the entrance.

Suddenly a boy officer, a cigarette hanging nonchalantly from the corner of his mouth and a revolver in his hand, lined the Bolshevik guards up against the wall and disarmed them. He had come with the pass-word of the Military Revolutionary Committee, and the paper he carried in his pocket was stamped with the blue seal. It did not occur to any one at that moment that either the pass-word or the seal could have been

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stolen. The soldiers obeyed every command of the Military Revolutionary Committee without question. Not until they were prisoners and had heard the lock on the basement door turn behind them did they realize that they had been tricked.

"Who are they?" everybody asked. "Has Kerensky come? Is Korniloff here?"

I put the question to a Russian admiral standing near me. He shook his head in despair. "God knows, madame. I don't."

The boy officer and his squad departed as suddenly as they had come, carrying most of the rifles with them. Quiet settled on the hotel. The old guard was in prison, and there was no new one. Two small boys picked up a couple of rifles left behind, and slung them across their shoulders in imitation of the armed workmen.

"Krasnia Gvardia!" (Red Guard!), one said, hunching down into his coat. A woman laughed hysterically.

I left the hotel, and followed the officer down the Morskaya to the telephone building two blocks below. Motor-trucks and a couple of touring cars had been placed across the street as a barricade to traffic; and the crowd, warned

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back by uniformed men with rifles in their hands, kept at a safe distance.

Albert Williams was standing in the doorway, talking to a group of soldiers. They were very evidently not Bolsheviki, and I crossed the street to find out what had happened there. He drew me quickly into the shelter of the courtyard and began to explain. The telephone exchange was once more in the hands of the military school cadets, and they were momentarily expecting a counter-attack by the Red Guard and the sailors. A tall, dark-eyed boy, one of the ten who had stood guard over the Provisional Government in the Winter Palace, related in perfect English the events of the morning.

At daybreak an automobile drove up to the door, and two officers stepped out. They said that Kerensky was on his way to Petrograd and would arrive in a short time with two regiments. They provided the boys with the seal of the Military Revolutionary Committee and the proper pass-words, told them to go to the first cluster of guards gathered around one of the street-corner fires, surprise them, overpower them by numbers, and take their guns away. Their orders

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then were to take the telephone exchange and the War Hotel by means of the pass-word, and hold them until Kerensky arrived.

The boys started blithely forth, convinced that they were preparing the way for the restoration of the Provisional Government and it was merely a matter of an hour or two before the victorious troops of Kerensky would come to relieve them.

"I don't see why he does not come," he ended plaintively. "We can't hold out long alone."

At this time there was only an occasional volley, but at two o'clock the firing began in earnest from both ends of the street. The cadets, mere children in this business of war, built barricades of boxes and boards across the sidewalks, and when the supply of these was exhausted they carried logs from a wood-pile. They took up positions behind these frail protections and fired at the attacking forces, which came at them from two directions. Some hid behind the motor-trucks, resting their guns upon the engines. Some lay flat in the mud upon the wooden cobbles, and fired from underneath the cars.

I watched the fight, first from behind the barricade in the courtyard, then went upstairs to a

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front window where I could look down upon the street.

In a room on the second floor, Antonoff, head of the Red Guard and member of the Bolshevik War Commissary, was a prisoner.

The crowd outside the building, led by a factory worker and reinforced by sailors, learned that Antonoff was in the building, and were mad to be at the throats of the men who were holding their leader. They had still another grievance against the cadets. Many of these same boys had been captured once in the Winter Palace, and allowed to go free. They had broken their parole, and the sailors especially were bitter to think they had to sacrifice more of their comrades to re-arrest them.

In the middle of the afternoon the cadets suggested a peace parley, offering to surrender Antonoff if they were allowed to go free.

"We'll take Antonoff ourselves, and kill every last one of you," came back the answer.

The boys grew desperate.

"Why does n't Kerensky come? Why does n't Kerensky come?" they asked again and again.

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There was no one to answer. The older officers, who had been directing them, completely disappeared. The stock of ammunition diminished. A Red Cross automobile dashed up to the building at half-past two, left a box of hand-grenades, and departed again.

A machine-gun had been set up on a wooden box in the street, and in the courtyard a woman with a shawl over her head loaded and reloaded the tape. The attacking forces were pressing closer and closer upon the building. The street barricades were abandoned. A few of the cadets poured up the stairs and into the front rooms. At four o'clock I was moved from my place at the window.

"We want to shoot from here," one of the cadets explained.

With that they smashed the glass with the butts of their rifles, and took their places behind the yellow silk curtains. I walked across to a window overlooking the court. Two cadets passed into the building bearing a wounded comrade, who lay limp in the arms of his bearers.

"Come away from here. They're down in the

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courtyard at the foot of the stairs!" somebody shouted.

With that the hall was deserted. Men and girls fled to the back of the building. In a pantry I found a boy officer with a huge breadknife, trying to cut the buttons from his coat with hands that trembled so they made a long job of it. Still another was tearing frantically at his epaulets. In an ante-room behind the switchboard three more discovered the street clothes of some mechanics, and were quickly stripping themselves.

Suddenly the thing for which these boys had striven—the coveted gold braid and brass buttons of an officer's uniform, symbol of their superiority—had become their curse. Any one of them would have given the last thing he possessed on earth for the suit of a common working-man. Stripped bare of every scrap of the pride and tradition of their class, they were caught in the grip of a fear that drained every drop of blood from their faces and every bit of courage from their hearts.

Wandering about from room to room, stopping here and there to say "Kharasho!" or "Nichevo!"

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to some poor girl dissolved in tears upon a bench, I came out finally in a corridor where Mr. Williams was standing with his interpreter. A cadet officer had hold of the lapels of his overcoat, and was pleading with him to take it off and let him escape. The boy's bronze face was gray with fear, and his words tumbled over each other in jumbled incoherence. I glanced from him to the American, and saw a pair of eyes full of pain and indecision. A tense, silent moment followed—a moment in which I held my breath and waited.

The shooting outside had stopped. Dark was closing in around us. Everything for me was obliterated but the one man asking for something that might save his life, and the other to whom it was second nature to give, torn between conviction and desire. I knew the tumult in his soul.

The coat of rough brown cloth and American cut was strikingly different from any other in Russia, and it had become a familiar garment in revolutionary Petrograd. Its owner was an excellent speaker, and he had talked to the men at the front, on the fleet, and in the factories, and

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wrapped in the brown coat he had slept in peasant huts from Moscow to Kieff.

The Russian workmen loved him and trusted him, and he had come to know them and to believe in the integrity of their idealism. He had pity for these frightened fellows, but he was almost as bitter as a Red Guardsman at the breaking of parole, the stealing of passes, and the illegitimate use of the Red Cross car.

"If I give him my coat they will recognize it and think me a traitor," he said.

I did not answer. I felt I had no right to plead with him against his principles. His Russian had completely deserted him. He turned to his interpreter:

"Tell him I can't give him my coat, but perhaps I can help in some other way," he said.

The interpreter obeyed, and the officer walked away with a hopeless, despairing shake of the head.

We stood for a moment looking after him, both of us possessed of a frantic consciousness that something must be done to save these boys doing the bidding of the men who had left them in a trap.

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"Oh, if I could only speak this language!" I said, in a futile explosion of protest against my helplessness.

"What would you do?" my companion asked.

"I don't know what I'd do, but I'd do something!" I answered, and started down the hall, deserted a few minutes earlier. Mr. Williams followed me.

"Find him," he said. "I can't give him my coat, but I will leave it here, and he can come and take it."

I hurried past the stairway, with one swift glance toward the dark courtyard, where men from the street were crowding thicker and thicker. I went from corridor to corridor, jostling groups of frightened men and women, and stumbled at last into a back room, where most of the cadets had gathered. They had thrown down their guns and were waiting for the end. I searched the faces. The officer was not among them.

Mr. Williams, by this time possessed of a passion to find him, had been hunting in another part of the building. At the moment, for both of us, the whole tragic situation was done up in the

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plight of this one feeble human being trying to save his life. Every second we expected to hear the rush of men on the stairway.

"Perhaps I can do something with Antonoff," Mr. Williams suggested. "Where are the boys?"

I led him back to the room where I had found them, and he offered to go to the imprisoned Minister of War and try to make terms of surrender that would guarantee their safety.

"Pazhal'sta, barin! Please help us! Please save us!" they cried in chorus.

With two cadets to guide him and unlock the door, he disappeared. We waited a breathless two minutes. When he returned, a queer, emaciated little fellow, stoop-shouldered and pale, walked beside him. A very long nose and a fringe of long pale hair were almost all of him visible below the wide brim of his soft felt hat. Surely the War Minister had none of the traditional appearance of a Russian military man.

"Tavarisch Antonoff, save our lives!" cried the cadets in unison. "On the word of the good revolutionist that we know you are, save our lives!"

"Where are your officers?" Antonoff asked.

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"They have all left us," they answered.

The terms of surrender were quickly made, and Antonoff and Williams started downstairs to face the crowd. The men of the Red Guard recognized their leader.

"Antonoff! Antonoff!" they shouted. "Nash, nash!" (Ours, ours!) "Where are the junkers?"

With this the men in the lead made for the stairs. Antonoff stopped them.

"I have given my word of honor as a revolutionist that these men in there shall not be killed, and as revolutionists you must keep that word."

Some of the Baltic fleet sailors, who had come down from the *Respublica*, recognized the American.

"Americanski tavarisch!" one of them shouted.

Mr. Williams began speaking to them.

"I know the temptation you have," he said, "but the ideals of your Revolution will be sullied if you yield to it. If you insist on fighting till you kill the last junker, it will be a useless massacre, and I will make it known around the world."

He explained the case of the boys and their

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desertion by their officers, and when he finished a vote was taken. All the sailors lifted their hands. A few of the Red Guard murmured dissent.

Antonoff turned to them.

"I have made my terms of surrender," he said, "and I will myself shoot the first man who harms one of the junkers."

There was a ring of finality in his tone. The men looked at him in astonishment.

"Shoot us?" they cried incredulously.

"Yes," he answered. "I would rather that we should all die than that this American should say that revolutionists of Russia were base and revengeful!"

This time all the hands went up.

A committee from the city Duma arrived at that moment, and as the cadets filed down the stairs, the leader took the hand of the first one and placed it in the hand of a sailor.

"This is prisoner number one, and I trust his life into your hands. Guard it for the honor of the Revolution," he said.

When the last man was delivered, the sailor who brought him downstairs tossed a contemptuous glance in his direction and said: "The last

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of the trash!" He was quickly hushed by one of his companions.

Outside in the Morskaya an occasional shot sounded above the shuffle of feet in the courtyard.

"Provokator! Provokator!" the sailors cried, and cautioned each other against being aroused to response.

Meanwhile the frightened telephone operators slipped quietly away in the dark. None of the terrors they had feared in the long hours of the afternoon had materialized. They all went on strike, and the next time I called at the exchange the switchboards were manned by sailors, soldiers, and a few factory workers, whose poor bewildered brains and clumsy fingers struggled desperately to master the intricate science of plugging in and plugging out.

The telephone exchange and the War Hotel were not the only spots where trouble raged that Sunday. At the Vladimirsky Military School, Bolshevik forces and cadets fought a desperate battle, and many were killed. Some of the cadets were reported to be frightfully mutilated by bayonet thrusts. On the Gogol, not far from St.

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Isaac's Cathedral, there were a few hideous moments of slaughter. An armored car came down the street. Inside were three cadets and a chauffeur. The people in the street hurried into a doorway for shelter. In the group were civilian men, women, and children, and six sailors. The car came to an abrupt stop just opposite the doorway, and the guns, opening fire, sprayed death into that cluster of humans.

A workman was the first to fall, and a little newsboy crumpled on the pavement beside him. The sailors darted toward the car, and jabbed their bayonets through the holes in the steel plates. The shrieks of the men inside told plainly that the weapons had struck home. The firing ceased as abruptly as it had begun. When the shrieks suddenly died away, they dragged three dead men out and stretched them on the cobbles. They were covered with blood and bayonet wounds until they were unrecognizable. The chauffeur, who was uninjured, begged for mercy, and a Bolshevik in the crowd said:

"For God's sake, let him go. Let's not kill any more of them than we have to!"

It was midnight when I again returned to the

The Winter Palace from the Red Arch

Russian soldiers at home in the Palace of a Grand Duke

Soldiers and factory workers took the place of striking telephone operators



Red Guards on duty before Trotsky's door

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hotel, which had in the meantime been recaptured by the Bolsheviki. This time they were taking no chances. The lobby and the upper floors swarmed with sailors. There were hundreds of guards where the day before there had been twenty. They had commandeered the entire second floor, and with machine-guns had taken positions in the front windows. The servants had fled. The beds were unmade. There had been no food in the hotel all day. Most of the residents had departed.

Nearly a week had passed since the beginning of the Bolshevik Revolution, and we were still in utter darkness as to what was going on in the rest of the world. The last news from the outside was the joyous word that woman suffrage had carried New York State by 100,000 majority. It seemed incredible, as wild as the wild rumors that were pouring in from Siberia and the Caucasus; we did not dare believe it. Kerensky's movements just outside the city continued to remain shrouded in mystery.

I found my desk covered with messages from kindly members of the American colony, bent on rescuing me from the storm-center of Revolution.

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I read them over with a sense of pleasure—that pleasure which always comes with the knowledge that warm, friendly human guardian angels are standing in the offing; but I had not the slightest intention in the world of obeying any of the well-meant advice or accepting any of the gracious hospitality. Here under this very roof was the theater in which the tremendous revolutionary drama, involving the destiny of nearly two hundred million Russians and no one could say how many others of the peoples of the world, was being played. It was for this I had come to Russia. By the side of it personal security seemed a trivial thing.

I put the notes away and went downstairs to talk with some of the sailors. Their conversation that night was chiefly of provocation. Again and again I heard the words, "Provokator! Provokator!" My Western mind had come reluctantly to the admission that provocation and Black Hundred plots were an actuality and not a nightmare of some dark age-long dead. I listened with interest to their charges against the monarchists, and wondered how much truth there might be in them.

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Coming down in the elevator next morning, I met Baron B. I had not seen him for several days, and frequently I had wondered what he was doing in the new crisis. I looked up at him as he entered the lift, and there was something in his face that made me shudder inside.

"Where were you yesterday?" I asked, with as much self-control as I could muster. "We did not see you around, and we thought perhaps you had been arrested."

He laughed—a mirthless, cruel laugh that was more nearly a sneer.

"No," he said; "they won't arrest me. I was out with a rifle over my shoulder. I was one of them. I was a Red Guard!"

CHAPTER XIII

THE GRAVE OF HOPE

MYSTERY shrouded the Petrograd front. In the days that followed the battles of Gatchina and Tsarskoe Selo only a few meager facts came out of the background of wildly conflicting rumors.

We knew that Kerensky, with that dazzling gift of his for momentarily overpowering men, had driven in an automobile into the midst of a detachment of rebel soldiers, and disarmed them.

We knew that the ragtag army of the Red Guard, fired by faith in their cause, had taught the Cossacks that it takes more than a military reputation to make a fighting man.

We knew that the sailor Dydenko had gone alone across No Man's Land to plead the cause of the proletarian revolt, and had come back with the surrender of the opposing forces.

We knew that it was all over.

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At heart the Cossacks were no more eager for killing their brothers than the rest of the Russians. They were the policemen of the Tsar because they had known no other calling, seen no other vision. The Revolution had broken their traditions, given them a new faith. They were no longer a unit ready to do the bidding of a master. Many of the younger Cossacks had already embraced the Bolshevist faith, and in the months to follow more and more of them were to desert the ways of their fathers.

There is something poignantly tragic in the picture of Kerensky out there alone beyond the edge of the city, where for an hour he was an uncrowned king. Like most of the Russian leaders of the revolutionary year, he came out of nowhere, flashed for a moment on the world's screen, and disappeared into nowhere again. If some day he should emerge from that land of silence into which so many Russians are exiled by the changing fortunes of revolution, we may learn what really happened to him at Gatchina. The sailor Dybenko, in his report to the Soviet, declared that Kerensky, when he learned the soldiers had deserted him, said to General Krasnoff:

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“Your Cossacks have betrayed me. I shall drive a bullet into my brain.”

According to Dybenko's story, General Krasnoff suggested that the only courageous thing for the Minister-President of Russia to do was to go to Petrograd, and offered to give him an escort of eight men. To this Kerensky consented, but, while the escort was being formed, he asked to be allowed to clean himself up, and succeeded in changing to the uniform of a sailor and escaping in an *izvostchik*.

Leon Trotzky, in a telegram from the village of Pulkovo to his followers in Petrograd, said:

“On the evening of November 12 Kerensky sent a proclamation to the revolutionary troops to lay down their arms. The Kerensky troops had opened artillery fire. Our artillery replied and silenced the enemy. The Cossacks started an offensive attack but the withering fire of the sailors, Red Guards, and soldiers compelled them to turn back. We have cut into the ranks of the enemy—the enemy is running. Our troops are pursuing. Lettish sharpshooters are arriving from the front and approaching Kerensky's rear. An order for his arrest has been issued.”

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Kerensky's associates in Petrograd tried to keep in touch with him to the last minute, but the scraps of information they received were unilluminating, for he himself could not tell how long he would be able to hold his men. Their distaste for killing each other was far greater than their loyalty to any individual or institution.

Meanwhile the city shuddered at the tales of frightfulness centered around the ancient Fortress of Peter and Paul, where the ministers of the Kerensky Cabinet and the military school cadets were imprisoned. Mothers, driven nearly mad by the stories of starvation, cruelties, and atrocities, appealed frantically to the city Duma and the American Red Cross Mission to investigate these reports.

At the request of the Duma and the American Mission, I became one of a committee of four to visit the prison and interview the inmates. Two of us—Daddy R. and M. Mikhailoff, of the London *Telegraph*—were Russians.

We walked in awed silence through the arched gate in the massive outer wall, each busy with his own thoughts. To the two Russians this was a day never to be forgotten. Both of them had

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been old revolutionists, and Mikhailoff had been a prisoner in this very fortress not many years before. For me the place was full of ghosts. They walked before me in a strange procession. I watched while Peter, who stalks the city by day and by night, killed his own son. I saw Catherine bury alive the critics who found her marital practices not to their liking. I saw the Decembrists—they who first fought to free the serfs—martyred before my eyes. Last of all, I saw the fortress gate swing wide on that glad March day when the revolutionists took possession of Petrograd, and men and women, with blinking eyes and tears of joy streaming down their faces, marched into the free world.

Mikhailoff brought me back to the moment.

“Listen! The bells—it’s the Gospodi pomilui [Lord save me],” he said. “It was the chimes that almost drove us mad. The monotony of them—the terrible regularity!”

We stood still till the sound died away, then passed indoors to a crowded waiting-room. The place was dirty, and the air foul. The floor was littered with cigarette stubs, and heaped on a

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table in one corner was a strangely assorted pile of paper bundles of food, brought by relatives for the prisoners.

Through a door at one side of the room unshaven soldiers, in mud-colored uniforms, passed ceaselessly in and out. Most of the occupants were women, poor women with *platoks* tied over their heads, and prosperous, well dressed women with diamonds in their ears. Some sat dejectedly against the wall, waiting. Some, in high-pitched, nervous voices, demanded to see their sons and brothers immediately. The guards replied wearily but patiently.

Daddy R. was for quietly sitting down with the waiting ones, in Russian fashion. We prodded him into action, and made our way past two sentries to an inner office. At the desk sat a soldier *commissaire*. His eyes were heavy with sleep and his young face gray with fatigue. In a corner of the office two exhausted comrades lay asleep on the floor. By sheer effort of will, the *commissaire* kept on answering questions fired at him from a dozen tongues. In time our turn came. He read our passes, glanced at the seals,

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gave a hurried order to a guard, and bowed us out.

We passed through a succession of dingy offices, up a dark stairway, and down a long corridor.

"It's the Troubetskoy bastion," Mikhailoff whispered in an awed undertone.

Our guide motioned us to wait. At the other end of the hall some sailors and soldiers were talking. One of them looked up, saw me, and, detaching himself from his comrades, brought a chair, which he offered with a pleasant "Pazhal'sta."

A few minutes later the commandant of the bastion appeared, a bunch of keys jangling in his hand. He wore the uniform of an officer, and spoke a little English. Like the others, he was pale and haggard, and later in the day he confided to me that he could not live through another five days like those just past.

"Up to the time of the last Revolution," he said, "there were only three or four members of the old régime in the entire prison. We were not prepared with food or fuel to take care of many more. Suddenly, in a single day, we had to find

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quarters and provisions for nearly three hundred. Then, there were the mobs. I have not felt secure for a single second."

He took us first to a tier of cells in which the military school cadets were imprisoned. At the door of the first cell he asked if we preferred to talk to the boys alone.

"They might feel freer," I said, and he nodded and withdrew.

They all told virtually the same story. They had been terribly frightened on their way to the prison, for the crowds had tried to take them from the convoy.

"They have killed our comrades!" the mobs shouted. "They are trying to destroy our Revolution. It is time to stop their cake-eating. Throw them in the river! Put a bullet through them!"

Once a group of them were lined up against a wall; but the convoy fought off the crowd. In the first twenty-four hours in prison, things had been bad because the cells were damp and cold and there was no food; but the boys explained the conditions as the commandant had done, and blamed no one.

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In another part of the bastion we found the members of the Kerensky Cabinet. Tereshchenko, the late Foreign Minister, sat cross-legged on his cot, a cigarette in his mouth. He greeted us pleasantly, and in the softest, most musical English I ever heard inquired for news of the French front and of Moscow.

The cell was as large as an ordinary American bedroom, and was equipped with modern sanitary conveniences and provided with an iron cot and table. He said he had everything he wanted, and believed his release merely a matter of a few days. If he could have foreseen the long months of imprisonment, I doubt whether he would have presented such a cheerful front that afternoon. Just before I left Petrograd I heard of him again. The dark-haired, debonair boy statesman had disappeared. His shoulders had begun to droop, and a gray beard hung from his chin. The Minister of Rumania, during the day that he spent in the Fortress of Peter and Paul, met him in the exercise-yard.

"I see you now," Tereshchenko said to the Rumanian, "but I shall not see you again. My shame that my country has imprisoned the diplo-

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matic representative of another country is too great."

In similar cells we found Kishkin, Bourtzeff, Rutenberg, Paltchinsky, and other men arrested after the fall of the Winter Palace. The top of Rutenberg's head had been grazed by a bullet on the night of his arrest. The ministers were marched from the Winter Palace to the fortress. The prison guard, discovering a crowd in the darkness, thought it was a mob attacking the fortress, and opened machine-gun fire to frighten them away. Ministers and convoy alike followed the Russian custom in such cases, and fell flat on their faces in the middle of the street. Rutenberg was a little slower than the others.

He was rebellious against imprisonment, and complained of the quality of the food.

"We live hourly in fear of our lives," he said.

It was true—they did. It was quite plain that their position was a precarious one, because they were in a sense hostages, and any violence done to the Bolshevik leaders would very quickly have met with retaliation from the Bolshevik followers in the prison garrison. The stories of outrages circulated so freely outside the prison were

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more of a menace to the men inside than anything else could have been, because they helped to keep alive the bitterness and hatred that made their position so critical.

Vladimir Bourtzeff and Daddy R. were old friends, and when the guard unlocked the door of Bourtzeff's cell, they threw themselves into each other's arms and kissed on both cheeks. Bourtzeff, who uncovered the ring of spies and provokators headed by the infamous Azeff, had many times suffered imprisonment and exile at the hands of the Tsar. Now, with the turn of Revolution, he was proclaimed a reactionary. His paper was suppressed by Kerensky, and General Verkhovsky, the young Minister of War, sued him for libel. With the overturn of the government, he made a bitter attack upon the Bolsheviki, accusing Lenin of being a German agent and a traitor to Russia.

From the cells occupied by the Kerensky ministers we went to those in which the prisoners of the old régime had spent the revolutionary year, ignorant of the seething life beyond their prison walls. As we entered the cell of Soukhomlinoff, Minister of War under the Tsar, the two Rus-

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sian members of the party led the way. Soukhomlinoff arose and stepped forward to meet us. As if with a single impulse, the two revolutionists put their hands behind their backs and bowed low before him. They were ancient enemies—they could not shake hands.

Soukhomlinoff started, recovered himself, and bowed low in return. He turned to me, inviting me to a seat on his cot, and apologized that he had nothing better to offer. He wore a comfortable lounging robe, and there was a certain air of ancient elegance about him, despite his position and his prison cell. His hair—what there was of it—was quite white, and there were pouches under his faded old blue eyes, and deep lines in his face. The table beside him was as shipshape as a sailor's kit-box. He picked up a portfolio and opened it. His old hand shook as he untied the string and revealed a pile of foolscap closely written in a small, fine hand.

"It is here," he said—"my case. It is all here. I have written this to prove that I am innocent."

He fingered the paper tenderly. It was the work of many dreary hours. We let him talk about it for a few minutes, then asked how he

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fared there in prison under the Bolshevist régime.

"I have no complaint," he said. "Perhaps it is better than before, because they give us the newspapers. That means much to a man in prison. To-day I am very happy because my wife has just been to see me. She is very good to me, and comes as often as they will permit her. Those are great days—the days of her visits."

It was for this wife, young and considered a very beautiful woman according to the Russian standard, that Soukhomlinoff is supposed to have sold his country in those days when the Russian troops fell like dead leaves in an October wind because they had nothing but naked hands with which to meet the mighty cannon of the advancing Germans.

Our last visit that day was to the arch villain of the old régime, Biletsky, chief of the Tsar's secret police. Biletsky has many sins written large against his name. Few men within the length and breadth of all the Russias have been responsible for more broken hopes, more crushed lives, more human wrecks, than the master detective. He was a big fellow with iron-gray hair and beard, and a pair of sharp brown eyes, quick-

The Minister of Rumania and his staff just before his brief incarceration in the Fortress of Peter and Paul; 



© Orrin B. Wightman

**"Old Ivan Veliki high up in the heavens faithfully thundered the hours above the
citadel of church and state"**

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shifting and penetrating. He was able, shrewd, and as hard as his reputation implied.

He was glad to talk—grateful, I think, for a chance. He welcomed the Bolshevik régime. Possibly it was because he believed, with most of the men of the old order, that the quickest way to restore the monarchy was to give the radicals a loose line and help them to create all the disorder possible. Perhaps it was because he thought new names on the prison roster, new hates in the revolutionary heart, would detract attention from the old. Perhaps it was only because he believed any change might hold the possibility of greater leniency for himself. Perhaps it was, as he said, because the Bolsheviks had given him newspapers and put him once more in touch with the world from which he had been so long isolated.

It was quite dark when we left the prison. As I passed one of the cells in which the cadets were being held, I peered through the peep-hole in the door, and saw a group of boys with a pack of cards spread out on the mattress before them. The city was saving electric light, and the current had not yet been turned on for the night.

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A stub of candle lit up their faces, and revealed them intent upon their game. If they were in danger they had forgotten it.

We came away, agreed upon one thing: whatever might come of chaos and disorder in this new régime, the Peter and Paul of to-day would never be a match for that Peter and Paul of the old days when violence and cruelty was an organized and deliberate policy.

CHAPTER XIV

MOTHER MOSCOW WEEPS

It was midsummer when I went first to Moscow, and the trees against the old Kremlin wall were deep in green. Mother Moscow was haughty then—aloof, superior. She sat serene amid the golden domes of her churches that are “forty times forty,” an old, old lady, remote and inscrutable like the East, the mystery of the ages in her smile.

“Petrograd is not Russia,” she said. “Float it out to sea. Let the Germans take it. It is a plague-spot. It is of the West. We shall be well rid of it!”

Sometimes, in a mellower mood, she spoke of Petrograd as one might speak of a naughty child.

“Petrograd is behaving very badly, but it matters little. She is really of small consequence. Some day I may come to the limit of my patience, and then— Well, we shall see!”

Poor Mother Moscow! How little she knew

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revolution seemed as remote as the days of the Boyars.

But there were other hours—hours outside the Kremlin—when I saw a different picture and felt another impulse stirring beneath the ancient city's calm.

There was the Governor-General's palace, where, half the day and more than half the night, workmen and soldiers discussed the fundamental differences between political and economic revolutions. That cry, already so familiar in Petrograd, "All power to the Soviet!" grew louder and louder with each passing day, and I heard the hectic speeches punctuated with the same "Bourgeoisie!" "Counter-Revolution!" "Capitalists!"

There was a room, up near the top of a dingy hotel, where stacks of literature were piled ceiling-high, and returned exiles wrote revolutionary articles, addressed envelopes, formed committees, and passed resolutions, while Mother Moscow dozed.

Behind a desk in this room sat a dark-haired woman with deep, sad eyes. There was a cash-drawer in front of her, and all day long the people, from factory and trench and farm, filed past

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that desk and left their kopecks and their rubles. The money was to buy a press to print more and more Bolshevist leaflets, and a newspaper that should call the people to revolution.

The seeds of their propaganda fell on ready soil.

On the sides of the palaces of stone and stucco, huge posters announced the opening of the opera season of 1917 and 1918 under the direction of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Committee. This in the famous Balshoi Theater, where imperial eyes had viewed the triumph of the greatest singers in all Europe!

Besides, if Mother Moscow had turned her face for a day toward the Iberian Virgin, she would have seen that the number of those who paused to cross themselves before the sacred ikon grew less and less, and the number of those who went by without even a glance in that direction continually increased.

Even when Mother Moscow invited Kerensky to her for that famous Moscow conference, her invitation was a summons, and she gave it in the spirit of a mother telling her child that it was time to come and be spanked. That meeting was

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pregnant with prophecy; but Mother Moscow did not heed.

There were men among the merchants and manufacturers in Moscow who saw the handwriting on the wall, but they did not read it entirely aright. They knew that all was not well in the stronghold of capitalism and ancient conservatism, but they thought all that was needed was a little more time and trouble to make the people ready to accept their will.

Here and there one remembered with misgiving the days of 1905, when Moscow became a storm-center of revolt, while Petrograd knew comparative quiet. Perhaps also here and there was one who remembered a prophecy of the Tsar. At that time the mighty men of Moscow sent petitions to Petrograd, urging the government to grant a constitution and other political reforms. The Tsar replied, rather wisely, that nothing short of economic reforms would ever satisfy the people, and recommended that the manufacturers grant these. Each group was willing to please the people, but it must be at the expense of the other. Neither was willing to sacrifice its own power.

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Now that political equality had come, the first pæans of rejoicing had hardly sounded before the economic demands found voice. Strikes in Moscow grew more and more frequent. Production steadily decreased. Many of the owners closed their factories on the ground that they could not be run upon the terms of the workers except at a loss. Some shut down because they thought it would the more quickly bring the workers to their senses. Industry was completely disorganized.

It was not until four days after the Bolshevik uprising in Petrograd that Mother Moscow suddenly became aware that she was to be the battleground of a class conflict quite as determined and far more bitter than any that had torn the scorned City of Peter.

It was Friday night, November 9, when the first stray shots near the Moscow Duma signaled the coming trouble. At three the following morning the populace awoke to the alarm of a heavy fusillade. For seven days the firing continued almost ceaselessly. There were pickets on every corner, and on Tuesday heavy artillery sent the guests of the Metropole and National

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hotels to the cellars in search of safety. The American Red Cross Mission turned its headquarters in the National Hotel into a first-aid station.

The military school cadets, reinforced by some of the older officers, were intrenched in the city Duma, the Riding Academy, and the Kremlin. The Bolsheviki conducted their military operations from the Governor-General's palace. As the attack gained strength, the cadets were forced back into the Kremlin.

The Bolshevik army was made up largely of factory workers. The Moscow garrison, as a whole, had agreed to remain neutral; but twenty thousand soldiers offered to fight with the Bolsheviki, and it was estimated that about five thousand took part. The critical moment came with the arrival of a company of sailors and Red Guards, sent from Petrograd to reinforce the Soviet. Kaledin was supposed to be marching to the rescue of Mother Moscow at the head of the Don Cossacks, but his coming was as mythical a performance as that of Kerensky's at Petrograd.

When the surrender finally came, the cadets

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had been driven into a corner of the Kremlin. Telegraph and telephone wires had been broken by bullets, and Mother Moscow was cut off from all contact with the outside world. Street-car tracks were torn up, windows were smashed, the stucco sides of the quaint old houses were peppered with bullet-holes, and here and there the front of a building had been crashed in or the entire top story swept away.

The damage done to the Kremlin was slight—nothing compared to what we had feared; and if anything could dry Mother Moscow's tears and restore her ancient self-respect, it was this crumb of comfort.

Here, as in Petrograd, the defense of the Provisional Government centered around the Duma, and both bodies were dissolved by the Bolsheviki. Mayor Rudineff held up his hands when I asked him what he intended to do.

"We would like to issue an appeal warning the people against the ruinous policy of the Bolsheviki," he said; "but, unfortunately, the liberty of the press being suppressed, it is impossible."

While only a handful of people were killed in

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the Bolshevik Revolution in Petrograd, Moscow's death toll is estimated at from seven hundred and fifty persons to twice that number. Probably the former figure is more nearly correct.

Close beside the Kremlin wall, in the holiest of holy places, the workmen and soldiers of Moscow dug the great trench that was to receive the bodies of their fallen comrades. All day they dug, and when night came they continued their work by the light of torches. The ghostly linden trees have stood watch over many strange scenes there on the edge of the Red Square, but none stranger than this crowd of silent men, speechlessly turning the earth through the long, chill, dark hours. By daybreak they had finished.

It was the day of the proletariat. All others stayed indoors. The streets, but for the mourners of the proletarian dead, were deserted. At eight o'clock in the morning the procession started, and all day long the people filed past—a vast, endless throng of them, men, women, and little children. There were no priests, no prayers. Strong young soldiers in mud-colored coats carried the red coffins on their shoulders,

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and above the heads of the crowd the crimson banners flowed like a river of blood.

A sobbing, singing mass of human beings, tragic and triumphant, filled the vast square. Cavalry troops rode by at attention, and girls with *platoks* on their heads carried great oval handboxed wreaths of artificial flowers. Sometimes a military band went by, playing a funeral march, and sometimes the voices of the marchers lifted in the deep, rhythmical strains of the "Hymn of Eternal Memory." Men and women, old and young, wept as they saw the coffins lowered into that yawning trench.

If Mother Moscow wept that night, her tears fell quietly. She was in the presence of something big, something terrible, something magnificent—something unlike anything her old eyes had ever seen before.

There was another day, another funeral, another crowd of broken-hearted men and women. Their crumbs of comfort were more meager, for theirs was the bitterness of defeat; but they also hugged the faith that the stalwart boys who lay stretched in their coffins had died defending an ideal.

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Worlds of space lay between those two groups of mourners—they had no single thing in common but their grief. Their dead lay in the darkened recesses of great churches, and priests in funeral robes of black and silver said many masses for the repose of their souls. There were no red coffins, no crimson banners, no singing multitudes—only prayers and silent tears.

When it was all over—the killing and the burying—and there was nothing left but the joy of victory and the rancor of defeat, some one suddenly discovered that the light before the shrine of the Virgin on the Iberian Gate had gone out.

All that was left of the sacred ikon was one bullet-wounded angel. Two soldiers passing by the shrine halted.

“Look!” said one of them. “They said it was holy. It was just another of the d——d lies they have been telling us!”

CHAPTER XV

BLASTING AT THE ESTABLISHED ORDER

REVOLUTION is unconstitutional and illegal. In the scramble that follows the fall of tsar or kaiser, the spoils are to the nimblest. Any government that ensues is an illegitimate child. It can have no lawful parentage.

After the March Revolution, the first hurriedly organized ministry took its power from the Duma; but the Duma itself had lost its legality with the overthrow of the Tsar who created it. Each successive ministry was equally without legal basis. No election giving them validity had taken place.

There were, however, certain democratic movements in the army and navy and among the workers and peasants. The soldiers and sailors assumed power and immediately elected committees. The workers organized soviets. The peasants, constituting approximately one hundred and twenty-five million of Russia's hundred

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and eighty million organized committees. There were all-Russian conventions of each of these bodies that functioned nationally.

In its inception the government of Lenin and Trotzky was not sacrosanct in the eyes of the law, but the largest democratic forces in the country voted to support it.

The Soviet had its origin in the Revolution of 1905. At that time it was composed of workers. Early in the Revolution of 1917 it was joined by the Soldiers' Deputies, and became a Soviet of Workmen and Soldiers. Soon after the accession of the Bolsheviks to power, the peasants' delegates combined with the others, and the All-Russian Soviet was the result.

The local Soviet was simply a village or community council, like the old New England town meeting. The will of the majority prevailed. The local councils considered community problems and elected delegates, who met in what is known as the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

It was this Congress that was in session at Smolney on that November night when the

"Mother Moscow sat serene amid the domes of her churches"

After the Moscow battle



The Grave of the Brotherhood beside the old Kremlin wall

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Bolshevist guns on the cruiser *Aurora* were deciding the fate of the Kerensky Cabinet. It was this Congress that created the Council of People's Commissaries—that astounding government which was to make the old world stop still in its path and gasp with amazement.

Night after night in the white hall at Smolney I watched it hurling decrees at the established order, smashing every "sacred" rule and precedent of diplomatic procedure, and tossing verbal bombs with equal dexterity at enemies and allies.

Not until some quiet hour of the future, when the sociologists have had time to analyze those decrees, will the bewildered spectators looking on at those "madmen," with theories in their heads and bayonets in their hands, know how much constructive work along the lines of their idealism went into their making.

Even a superficial study will show the fallacy of the popular Western conception that the confusion in Russia was due to the absence of a formal government. The chaos existed in spite of the government, and continued because of lack of material power to enforce the decrees.

That government amazed foreign diplomats.

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The longest span of life allotted to it by them was three weeks. Hourly they awaited its demise. No diplomatic group in Russia, excepting only the American Red Cross Mission, realized the depth of its roots, the strength of its power, or its probable longevity.

Even the Bolsheviki themselves were surprised at its growing power.

"We can't succeed—Russia is too dark, too backward. But we have shown the way the world can follow. Other countries will succeed where we fail," they said.

The first decree of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets defined the form of what has generally come to be known as the Soviet Government. It provided that, until the convocation of a constituent assembly, "the direction of the individual branches of the state's life will be intrusted to certain committees." "The governmental power belongs to a collegium of the presidents of these committees, called Council of People's Commissaries."

The decree of the new democracy of Russia adopted a principle of recall declaring: "The control of the activities of the People's Commis-

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saries, and the right of removing them, belongs to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Delegates, and to its Central Executive Committee."

This Central Executive Committee functioned as a permanent parliament. The executive power was vested in the Council of People's Commissaries, who also exercised legislative functions. The decree named as temporary president of the Council of People's Commissaries, or as Commissary of Commissaries, Vladimir Oulianoff (Lenin), and as Commissary of Foreign Affairs L. D. Bronstein (Trotzky) Commissaries of other departments were chosen and governmental activities allotted much as they are in the Western democracies. The decree mentioned the commissaries by their own names and the names by which they have come to be known in the revolutionary movement.

Several subsequent decrees defined further governmental powers and limitations. Decree number nine vested all local power in local Soviets, automatically abolishing all previously existing governing bodies; and a later decree confirmed the right of the Soviet to levy taxes for

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local needs. The eighteenth decree provided what to my Western mind, looking for differences from and similarities to other governments, seemed to be either a veto or a referendum. It declared that all regulations or laws passed by the commissaries could be "postponed, changed, or removed" by the Central Executive Committee or the Soviet.

From the outset, the sessions of the Central Executive Committee were stormy ones. There were few objections to the passage of any decree that we who looked on could have offered which were not made by some one of those soldiers, workers, or peasants of Russia, nightly groping along strange paths for a way to peace and happiness.

In a bill of rights they declared for equality and sovereignty of peoples. It was in accordance with the second clause of this bill that the Soviets later voted to permit Finland and Ukraine to secede from Russia and establish independent states. The bill declared:

"The right of the peoples of Russia for a free self-organization up to partition and the organization of an independent nation."

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“The abolition of all national and religious privileges and limitations.”

“A free development of national minorities and ethnic groups populating the territory of Russia.”

The last two clauses in effect granted religious freedom to all sects, and affected particularly the “old believers” and the Jews, who had always been the object of pogroms and persecution.

The first decree passed after the creation of the government was the decree of peace. By this decree the government proposed at once to begin negotiations for a “just and democratic peace.” It defined such a peace to be one “without annexations and indemnities, and with the right of self-determination.” The decree abolished secret diplomacy, and the government declared its intention to publish the secret treaties. It appealed to the workingmen of France, England, and Germany for aid, and after adverting to the Chartists Movement in England and the revolutions of the French proletariat, said:

“All those examples of proletarian terrorism and historical creative genius are giving us a guaranty that the workmen of the above-men-

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tioned countries will understand that the liberation of mankind from the horrors and consequences of this war depends on them. They give us a guaranty that those workmen, with their resolute and unlimited energy, will help us to bring successfully to an end the question of peace, and the liberation of all the working and exploited masses from any kind of slavery and exploitation."

The day after Krylenko, the chief of the army, started negotiations for an armistice conference, I heard Trotzky begin his speech about the men with whom he was to negotiate in a fashion quite new in the annals of foreign diplomacy.

"Comrades," he said, "the bloody Kaiser and his generals have entered into negotiations with our comrade Krylenko, but not out of feelings of deep sympathy for Russia and the Russian revolution. If Germany could have had her own way she would have attempted more than once to seize revolutionary Russia by the throat.

"If the Kaiser and his generals, gritting their teeth, are now expressing willingness to enter into negotiations with a mere *praporschik* [non-commissioned officer]—if they do that, it is only

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because the Russian Revolution has cried to the people of the world of slaughter, famine, and disease in the trenches.

“The German Kaiser is now talking to us as an equal with equals because he knows that the uprising of the German workmen and soldiers would be fatal to him if he should make a different answer.”

Sometimes, when a critical situation developed, Lenin himself came to the meetings.

“We have to act, when action is due,” said Lenin. “We have the right to function as a government because we are a government.”

One night, when one of Lenin’s decrees was under discussion, Trotzky came to speak for him.

The Soviet government knew that the peasant would tolerate no further delay in the settlement of the land question.

The land decree was passed, not by the People’s Commissaries, but by the whole Russian Soviet. It abolished the landlords’ property in land and confiscated all landed estates with their movable and immovable property, excepting the small holdings of peasants and Cossacks.

The decree vested the administration of the

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land in district land committees or district soviets, and declared that "any damage to the confiscated property, which from now on belongs to all the people, will be declared a heinous crime, punishable by the revolutionary court."

The regulations for the administration of land were based upon instructions formulated by peasants in two hundred and forty-two districts. These instructions—or regulations, as we would call them—had been collected and published three months before the Soviet government took power. The peasants, impatient of the delays of the Kerensky government in solving the land problems, had taken the matter in their own hands.

The quantity of land to be distributed to the laborer was determined by the needs and conditions of the community. Such land could not be alienated, leased, or mortgaged. It was public property for the benefit of those working on it. The right to use land was granted to all citizens (without regard to sex) capable of cultivating it by personal or family labor. Hired labor was not allowed. In case of incapacity due to accident to a member of a rural community, the community must cultivate his land for two years.

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Farmers who, due to old age or inability, lose forever the possibilities of cultivating the land personally, lose the right of property. Instead, they receive pensional help from the state. The decree provided relief for those who suffered distress due to the confiscation of land. Such relief was difficult to give because of the poverty-stricken condition of the country, and to the owners from whom the land was taken any relief short of actual payment for the land (which the peasants would not even consider) seemed inadequate.

All mineral wealth of the lands, the forests, and the waterways became the property of the state. Estates in intensive culture, such as nurseries, greenhouses, breeding farms, were not subject for distribution, but were to be used for exhibitional and educational purposes.

The nearest thing to a property interest in land was the provision that, while the land of a "quitting member" must be turned back to the land fund, "the right of preference for receiving the estate of the retiring members belongs to the nearest relative, or to persons indicated by the retiring member."

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The form of the cultivation of the land was left to the decision of the village. The land could be cultivated by the community, by the individual, or by the banding together of any number of farmers.

In case of land shortage, the decree provided for re-distribution of the population by induced emigration.

A later land decree created a body known as a Conciliatory Chamber to deal with all disputes, and also enumerated in detail rules governing the conservation of natural resources. Personal property on the estates was not subject to distribution, but the land committees were ordered to inventory and hold it for the benefit of the community.

Three weeks after the Soviet government took the power, it completed its second most important step in its attempt to create a socialist commonwealth. What the land decree was to the peasant, the labor control decree was to the worker. It applied to all industries employing labor, and provided for control by committees, representing laborers and employers, called "organs of labor control." The control was not

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confined to a regulation of hours and wages, but extended to all branches of the industry, including the financial phase.

"The commercial secret is abolished," the decree declared. "The proprietors are obliged to furnish to the organs of labor control all their books and accounts and business correspondence, under penalty of law."

The decisions of the organs of labor control were binding alike on laborer and proprietor; but the decree provided for an appeal to a higher organ of labor control sitting in Petrograd and made up chiefly of technicians. The right of appeal was granted to both employer and employee. An all-Russian Soviet of labor control was created to coördinate all industries and direct the economic life. The quantity of production was to be determined by the needs of the community, and the price fixed by the cost of production as determined by the organs of labor control.

The Soviet realized the impossibility of immediately putting into effect any such radical overturn of the competitive system, and the decree stated that the labor control must be effected by gradual steps and regulation.

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Just as the peasants frequently had taken the land without waiting for decrees, the workers also took the factories. The industry of Russia was disorganized, and the control of factories had practically passed to the workmen early in the Kerensky régime.

The labor decree merely legalized an existing condition and attempted to regulate that control. The members of the factory committee, sobered by responsibility and a growing knowledge of what was possible of accomplishment, found themselves frequently in opposition to the workers who had elected them. The demands of the workers were naturally out of all proportion to the earnings of the industry, and the chief task of the committee was to educate the workers to understand this.

The head of the shop committee at Sestroretzk, a young Socialist named Woscup, told me that his committee was frequently forced to resign rather than grant the impossible demands of the men.

Sestroretzk is the oldest arsenal in Russia. It was founded by Peter the Great, and in 1917 employed sixty-five hundred men. The first strike

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of the March Revolution started there, and the first company of Red Guard was organized there. Five thousand of its members were Bolsheviks. The men demanded an increase of wages, which was granted, but they also demanded back pay beginning with May. The committee refused this, and a quarrel followed. The committee resigned. "This is our government, and our government can not pay," Woscup explained. The men, on second sober thought, saw the justice of the refusal, and voted to reinstate the committee.

"The majority is usually reasonable," explained the young committeeman.

A decree fixing the salaries of the People's Commissaries at five hundred rubles a month proved an effective measure in controlling the demands of the workers.

"The Commissary of Commissaries gets only five hundred rubles a month," one committee told some workmen who were demanding an increase. "Surely you do not want to take more from your government than Lenin takes." This argument won.

The salary decree provided that an additional hundred rubles a month should be paid to each

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commissary for each dependent member of his family. Under these terms, Lenin received only five hundred rubles, while Trotzky, who had a dependent wife and two children, received eight hundred. Five hundred rubles was equivalent in January to about fifty dollars gold, but its purchasing power was even less.

The workers in government-owned industries, such as posts, telegraphs, and railroads, were given the same right of control as the workers in privately owned industries.

Organs of the press "appealing to open resistance to the government, or sowing disturbance by means of slander or distortion of facts," or inciting to criminal action, were decreed subject to suspension.

This prohibitive legislation was so contrary to revolutionary ideas that the Soviet, in passing the decree, apologized in the following terms:

"The Workmen's and Peasants' Government asks the population to turn its attention upon the fact that in our modern society the wealthy classes, hiding behind liberal screens, have the possibility of seizing in their hands the lion's share of the public press, and by means of it freely

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poison the brains and consciences of the masses. To leave it in enemy hands at such a time, when it is not less dangerous than bombs and machine-guns, is out of the question. That is the reason those temporary but necessary measures of stopping the stream of dirt and slander were taken. The yellow and green press would drown with pleasure our young victory in this stream. As the new order will become consolidated, every administrative oppression of the press will be suspended."

The press became more and more vituperative against the Soviet government, and published, in addition to the accounts of existing chaos, countless rumors of outrages that never happened. In retaliation, the government decreed advertising to be a public monopoly, and permitted publication of advertisements in government organs only. In America such a provision would mean the annihilation of the press; but in Russia, where circulation rather than advertisement is the source of revenue, its effect was less drastic, and opposition papers continued to be published.

Suppressed one day, they came out the next under a new name. A paper called the *Day* was

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published as the *Night*, the *Midnight*, the *Two A. M.*, and took various other liberties with the clock.

The decree on education, drawn by Lunarcharsky, a writer and scholar, set forth the Soviet's ideas of instruction. Since the first Revolution, an educational committee had been at work investigating Russia's needs and formulating a legislative program. Contrary to the spirit of most of the ministries, this committee reached an agreement with the People's Commissaries, and continued its work in conjunction with them.

Local self-government in education was the fundamental principle of the program. Each locality had the right to determine for itself what it would learn, and when and where and how. The business of the governmental commission created by the decree was "to serve as a junction and helper, to organize sources of material, ideas, and moral support of the local bodies."

The Soviet declared that, whatever other governmental activities were curtailed, "the expenditure on public instruction must stay high. A generous budget for public instruction is the honor and glory of every people. Every truly

1

Marie
Spiridonova
Lunarcharsky

Leon Trotsky
Nikolai Lenin
Krylenko

Alexandra
Kolontai
Kameneff

Yesterday and today on the Marsovaya Pola—Priests with lifted ikons and gorgeous robes and Red Guards with bayonets and crimson banners

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democratic power in the domain of instruction of the country where ignorance and illiteracy are reigning, must take as its first aim the struggle against darkness. It must obtain in the shortest time a popular literacy by means of an organization of a system of schools answering the first principles of contemporary pedagogy, and it must introduce a general, obligatory, and gratuitous education."

All decrees regulating the individual lives of people inclined toward wide freedom. The night the marriage and divorce decree was passed, there was a long discussion as to whether there should be any limit to the number of divorces that any individual should be granted.

The decree, as it was finally passed, declared church marriages to be personal and private matters, and prescribed that the government recognize only civil marriages. Marriage consisted merely in the registration of intention made by two people, with a department provided for that purpose. Men were prohibited from marrying under the age of eighteen, and girls under sixteen, except in the trans-Caucasian district, where child marriages are the established custom.

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Here the age was fixed at sixteen for men and thirteen for girls. Polygamy was prohibited, as was marriage between half brothers and sisters, and between the insane. The contracting parties were given the right to choose the name of either husband or wife, or a combination of both names.

Divorce could be granted on the mere request of either one or both. The law provided for the care of the children in case parents could not come to an amicable decision, and declared all children born out of wedlock legitimate and equal in rights and obligations.

There were various measures for the protection of children. The child-labor decree prohibited the employment of children under fourteen years of age, and while it was under discussion the Commissary of Labor proposed that the year following the age limit be raised to fifteen and eventually to twenty. This suggestion was not adopted, but it fitted in with the general program of education, which aimed to keep all the children of Russia in school until they had been given the opportunities that only a few of the aristocrats in the past had enjoyed.

Women, and children under sixteen, were pro-

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hibited from night work; and there was an eight-hour law for workers, and a decree limiting the number of hours of employment a week to forty-eight. Among the social measures was decree thirty-four, which transferred the control of private hospitals to the government and obliged each industry to provide one hospital bed for each hundred workmen, and one maternity bed for each two hundred workwomen.

Social insurance against injuries, sickness, and non-employment was also provided in an elaborately worked out decree.

One of the early measures was a national grant of power to municipalities to commandeer all empty premises suitable for lodgings, and to billet in uncrowded apartments the residents of overcrowded dwellings.

When the Soviet had completed decree thirty-one, the five classes in civil life had been abolished, and only one title was left in Russia—"Citizen of the Russian Republic."

CHAPTER XVI

IN PLACE OF THE GUILLOTINE

ABOVE the gray mist of Petrograd in winter, the "terror" and the "guillotine" hung like threatening swords.

Organized punishment was no part of the revolutionary scheme, but every group of revolutionists who took power discovered, to their distress, that it was easier to will people into a line of conduct than to make them follow it.

The People's Commissaries were beset by enemies on every side. There were traitors within the ranks, and honest and dishonest enemies without. There were the usual number of weak or unscrupulous men in uniform who find their way into every army and navy. All were engaged, one way or another, in trying to keep the poor, battered social machine from running.

All the courts that refused to recognize the authority of the Soviet were promptly closed.

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The few remaining open were required to operate according to the decree of the People's Commissaries. The decree provided that the court should decide all cases, in the name of the Russian Republic. It permitted the judges to be guided in their decisions by the old laws "to the extent in which they did not contradict the revolutionary conscience and the revolutionary conception of right."

When the decree abolishing the old courts was passed, a Military Revolutionary Tribunal became the chief judicial body. I was present at Smolney Institute to witness its birth in one of the stormiest of the stormy sittings of the Central Executive Committee. In the words of the decree, it was organized "to conduct a campaign against counter-revolutionary forces, and in order to settle cases emanating from campaigns against marauders, speculators, saboteurs, and other such merchants, officials, etc."

Petrograd greeted the day of its first sitting with apprehension, and pronounced it "the beginning of the terror." On that day press and populace discussed little besides the guillotine.

It was a crisp, cold winter Sunday, and as I

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crossed the great Dvortsovaya Bridge that spans the Neva, and crunched through the heavy snow to the palace of the Grand Duke Nicolai Nicolaievitch, I kept telling myself again and again that there could be no guillotine; that the world must have moved forward a little bit in that century and more which stretched between this Revolution and that of France.

Countess Panina was the first prisoner at the bar. As Minister of Public Welfare in the Kerensky Cabinet, she was the first woman to be lifted to a place of official honor in Russia. When the Bolshevik Revolution overturned the government, Countess Panina had in her possession about ninety thousand rubles belonging to the Ministry of Education. Being a liberal and not a radical Socialist, she refused to recognize the authority of the People's Commissaries, and declined to turn the money over to Bolshevist representatives.

No woman of the liberal group was so highly esteemed as she. For years she had devoted her life to the improvement of social conditions for the workers. The Narodny Dom, the People's House at Petrograd, where many of the revolu-

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tionary meetings were held, was the result of her labor. The people were torn with conflicting emotions when she was brought to trial.

The music-room in the Grand Duke's palace, where the favorites of other days entertained their royal patrons, had been chosen as the scene of the trial. It was a big, square auditorium, paneled in rarest wood and roofed with delicately tinted glass—all simple, beautiful, and subdued. Into this setting the revolutionists had introduced a semicircular table covered with shiny red leather and skirted with a flouncing of turkey red cloth. The electric lights had gone out, and the room was lit by two garish red glass lamps with green shades.

The tribunal consisted of seven men—two peasants, two soldiers, two workmen, and the president, Jukoff. Most of them sat stiffly on the edges of green-brocaded silk chairs, and looked as thoroughly uncomfortable as if they were prisoners instead of the judges.

They were taking the job with desperate seriousness. Jukoff alone seemed undisturbed by the surroundings. He was a lean, clean-cut, intelligent-looking man. His eyes were deep set

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beneath the roof of a high forehead. He wore a neat sack-suit and a white collar.

The room was packed with a crowd of Countess Panina's friends. They cast hostile glances in the direction of the tribunal, and the atmosphere was charged with the tensivity of their feeling. A red-headed camera-man with a journalistic sense had established himself at a point of vantage. On a bench against the wall sat the prisoner, a soldier, looking very uncomfortable in a new and shiny uniform of padded khaki and high hat of sheepskin, standing on each side of her. The Countess might have been a social worker in any American city. She had a pleasant, round, well-bred face, and a pair of kindly eyes. She wore a severe black tailored suit and a small close-fitting turban.

Jukoff opened the proceedings with a reference to the part played by military revolutionary courts during the French Revolution, and declared that in Russia also the tribunals would "defend with severity the rights and traditions of the revolutionary peoples."

The charge was briefly stated. The prisoner pleaded "not guilty." The documentary evi-

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dence, a letter of Countess Panina's, was introduced. There were no lawyers. Prosecutors and defenders both came from the crowd. An intellectual, J. Gurevitch, made a statement denying the guilt of the prisoner. When he finished, a young workman, Ivanoff, took his place before the judges. He was from the artillery factory. A straw-colored Russian shirt, buttoned on one side, was as much a part of him as his fair hair and blue eyes. He spoke simply and earnestly:

"If I have seen some light in my life, it is only because she came into it," he said. "She has given me the possibility of thinking. It was in her Narodny Dom I learned to read. She is not a countess here. This is no time for distinctions. She is only a citizen who has given so much to her people. I ask you to give her freedom, because I would not want the world to hear that the Russian people are without gratitude."

As he walked to his chair, a professional man, one of Countess Panina's friends, stepped forward and shook his hand, and the crowd arose to pay him tribute.

Naumoff, the prosecutor, arose. He was a

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boy too, slightly younger than the other, and a factory worker also. His dark brown hair was closely cropped, and he wore a brown sateen shirt matching a pair of snapping brown eyes. As he began his attack, a murmur of dissent ran through the crowd, and an old man in a gray peasant's blouse rose from his chair. His face and the top of his bald head flaming scarlet, his long white beard shaking, both his hands waving in the air, he shouted: "I can't stand it—I can't stand it!" He was an old journalist from a provincial paper to whom the Countess had long been an idol. Two gray-haired women caught his arms and led him from the court-room, protesting violently as he went.

Naumoff continued:

"We should not look at it from the sentimental point of view," he said. "I admit that citizeness Panina is a noble woman, but the time has come to struggle for the things that are the rights of the people. The people must learn to read, because they have the right to know how to read, not through the kindness of any one person."

So I had come from ordered America, not to see the trial of the sweet-faced woman against the

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wall. It was the trial of an idea—the sure basis of human right against dependence on the benevolent whim of the individual. It was the order of the radical against the order of the liberal. Charity and justice, privilege and right, were having their day in court.

Two other speakers from the crowd followed the factory boys. Then the Countess Panina was asked to make a statement. Her breast rose and fell. Finally she spoke, her words coming faintly at first.

“I had taken the post, and I could not relinquish it except on order of the Master,” she said. “The Constituent Assembly is the only power that I shall recognize. The money is in an institution of credit, and I will turn it over when the Master speaks.”

She choked, stood silent a moment, and sat down.

The court went out to deliberate. In a moment the room was in an uproar. Every one was talking at once. Half an hour later, the judges filed back to their seats, looking as uncomfortable as when they had filed out. A Russian-American, a man named Krameroff, who

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had been the head of the Russian branch of the Socialist party in San Francisco, arose to protest. The president of the court motioned to him to be seated. He paid no attention. Jukoff ordered two soldier guards to place him under arrest. Krameroff still protested, then locked arms with the soldiers and walked smilingly out between them.

A sudden hush fell upon the court-room. The friends of Panina held their breath in expectation of the verdict.

Jukoff did not keep them long waiting. He arose and began reading:

“The Military Revolutionary Tribunal, in the name of the revolutionary nation, having examined the case with regard to the removal by Citizeness Panina of a sum of about 98,000 rubles from the funds of the Ministry of Popular Education, decides (1) that Citizeness Panina shall remain under arrest until she returns to the Commissary of Popular Education the national money taken by her and (2) the Revolutionary Tribunal regards Citizeness Panina as guilty of acting in opposition to the national authority, but, in view of the accused's past, confines itself to

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holding Citizeness Panina up to the reprehension of society.”

The reprehension of society! The scorn of the people! It was a typical Russian revolutionary decision, probable in no other land under the sun. The crowd breathed a sigh of relief. No one quite knew how to take it. The Countess Panina's status remained practically the same. Here and there some one started to clap. Others quickly hissed them into silence. Again the threatened “terror” had passed.

It was a far cry from this exhibition of revolutionary justice to the guillotine—almost as far as it was from that system of organized injustice of the Tsars that kept the endless procession of men and women marching toward exile and death.

A few days after the trial, friends of Countess Panina paid the money to the Department of Education, and the prisoner was allowed to go free.

She held no grudge against the Bolsheviki; for, though she differed from them, she understood their philosophy and the sincerity of their belief. She had felt, from the first, the difficulty of reconciling war and revolution, but believed, what-

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ever the price Russia must pay, she must never go back again to the old order.

The intricacies of law played no part in subsequent sittings of the Military Revolutionary Tribunal. There were no convenient technicalities either for the innocent or the guilty. Every case was judged simply on its merits as workmen, soldiers, and peasants interpreted right and wrong.

There were thirty-six members of the full tribune, divided into groups of six, each group sitting for a week at a time. Commercial and political offenders were tried by separate groups, and the cases ranged from that of a boy who had stolen a bundle of papers, to that of Puriskavitch, who was taken with a machine-gun and other counter-revolutionary paraphernalia in his possession.

Both were handled with equal seriousness. The boy's peculations amounted to something like a ruble and sixty kopecs, and his victim was an old woman who sold papers on the street. He insisted that he didn't have anything, and that all people who sold papers were really property-owners, and when their papers were gone

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they could always get more papers. At this, the old woman became very indignant, denied that she had anything to do with the bourgeoisie, and insisted that she was just a poor workingwoman.

The court asked the boy what he did with the money. He gave an accounting. The most important item was fifty kopecs for a ticket to the opera at the Narodny Dom. He explained that he was miserable and depressed, and he thought if he could go to the theater the world might not seem such a gloomy place. The judges listened with sympathy, and one of them asked gravely:

“Did you feel better after you went to the theater?”

The boy nodded.

There was nothing incongruous to the jury about the need for music. The Russian accepts it as an extenuating circumstance quite as readily as he would physical hunger.

The tribunal offered no censure, but decided that the old woman must be reimbursed for the loss of her papers. The boy had no money, so the court ordered that he sell something. He said he had nothing to sell. They looked him over, and decided that his rubbers were the only

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things with which he could part. Rubbers, in Petrograd, were precious possessions. The lad gave them up reluctantly. Then, remembering the Narodny Dom, his face broke into a satisfied smile.

"It was worth it," he said.

The most severe sentence I heard was that passed upon General Boldireff, commander of the fifth army, who was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. General Boldireff had refused to answer the summons of the Bolsheviki commander-in-chief of the army, Krylenko, to attend a council. When he was arrested, he said he was acting in accordance with the resolution of the Army Committee not to recognize the authority of any party. The Army Committee later reversed its decision, and resolved to obey the orders of Krylenko; but the General claimed not to have known this until his arrest by soldiers of his army. Jukoff asked the General how he would have behaved toward Krylenko if he had known that the Army Committee had recognized him as supreme commander-in-chief.

"At the present time," said the General, "I am a citizen of free Russia, and obey only the will

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of the nation as it will be expressed by the Constituent Assembly.

"I wished to preserve the army under my command from the struggle of parties, which would disorganize it," he said. "I am myself a son of the people, and honorably guarded the interests of the sons of the nation that had been intrusted to me. Those soldiers with whom I have shared hunger and cold, the mud and dirt of the trenches, the bitterness of defeat and the inspiration of victory, will admit this. I stood at my post like a sentinel, until I was removed from it by force."

The soldiers who had arrested Boldireff accused him of sabotage tending to disorganize the army, and called on the tribunal to punish him severely. Other soldiers under his command protested against the trial and pleaded in his defense.

In pronouncing sentence, President Jukoff said:

"In the name of the revolutionary people, the Revolutionary Tribunal finds General Boldireff guilty of disobedience to the chief, Krylenko; but, in view of the circumstance that he was not aware that the Army Committee had altered its former

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resolution and had decided to recognize Krylenko as commander-in-chief, resolves to sentence General Boldireff to three years' imprisonment."

In a second the place was in an uproar. Cries of "Shame! Shame!" "Despots!" swept the court.

Jukoff ordered the room cleared, and the next day warned the spectators against a recurrence of any such protests.

A lawyer, Charykoff, was put on trial for accusing one of the members of the Inquiry Committee of belonging to the Black Hundred. The offender apologized, and the punishment was again nothing worse than "public reprehension."

Despite the mildness of the revolutionary judgments, the talk of the guillotine continued. One afternoon, when it was at its height, I dropped in to the office of Jacob Peters—if one could describe as "dropping in" the intricate process of finding one's way through the labyrinth of corridors and up the many steps that lay between him and the sidewalk. He was on the top floor of the old police station on the Corokhovaya, where the Anti-Counter-Revolutionary Committee, successor to the Military Revolutionary Com-

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mittee that had organized the Bolshevik Revolution, had its headquarters.

Peters was pale, tired, and disillusioned. Human nature, viewed from the dubious vantage of the police station, left much to be desired. As I passed through the outer office I noticed a woman sitting there. Her plain face was pale, and an occasional tear trickled from her frightened eyes.

Peters sighed when I asked about her. "She's the secretary of the cadet party," he said. "I have to question her to find out what she knows about Counter-Revolutionary plots, and I hate to do it. I wasn't made for this work: I detest jails so that I can't bear to put any one into them."

"What about the guillotine?" I asked. "Surely the Russian Revolution will never resort to that. It's been over a hundred years since the French Revolution, and I would like to think the world had moved a little since then."

Peters shook his head. "No," he said; "we will never restore the death sentence in Russia—not unless"—he hesitated a moment—"not unless we have to use it for men who are traitors in our

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own ranks. What else can you do with a man who betrays his own cause.

"There are so few of us to do the work," said Peters. "We have to take every one who offers, and it is impossible to know who are our true friends and who are our foes. It is physically impossible for me even to read thoroughly every paper that I am asked to sign during the day. I have to trust to others, and it is getting so that I do not know who to believe."

With that, he opened the top drawer of his desk and pulled out a revolver. He laid it down, then took out three sealed packages of paper money. The first one contained a thousand rubles. It was a bribe demanded by Peters's predecessor in this very office, a handsome, debonair young person who rattled off French as rapidly as he did Russian. I had met him only a few days before, when he proudly announced that his name would go down in history. Now he was reposing in jail, and waiting for the Military Revolutionary Tribunal to get around to his case. The chance to become rich as well as famous had proved too much for him. He called one night at a vaudeville theater which produced clever satires on cur-

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rent politics, and ordered the place closed on the ground that one of the playlets was counter-revolutionary. Later, through an agent, he made it known to the manager that the payment of a thousand rubles would suffice to keep the place open. The Bolsheviki discovered what he was doing, dismissed him from office, and placed him under arrest.

The second envelop contained fifteen thousand rubles which had been taken the night before from a food speculator, caught in the act of trying to ship a large consignment of flour through Finland to Germany. He offered a bribe of a thousand rubles to a soldier at the Finlyansky Station. The soldier hurried to Smolney with the money and the news. He could not write, so he made his mark upon the complaint to which he swore. A detail of half a dozen soldiers and Red Guardsmen was sent to help him. The man was arrested, and evidence secured that unearthed a whole nest of speculators.

There was no longer a secret police in Russia. The *Okhranka* had gone with the Tsar into oblivion. But the people themselves were on the watch for evidences of anything that might

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threaten the power of the Commissaries. There was little that went on in the city that did not soon reach the ears of Jacob Peters's Committee.

A servant girl was sent to the Fortress of Peter and Paul with a cake for her master imprisoned there. Wrapped in a parcel, lying on the table near the cake, was a bundle of papers that had been carefully collected to be put out of the way of prying Bolshevik eyes. The servant apparently inadvertently took the wrong package to the prison, where it fell into the hands of the prison authorities. That the servant was not as inadvertent as she seemed was indicated a few days later, when she reported that Stephenovitch, whom the Bolsheviks were trying to find, would sleep that night in such a place, at such an hour. When the Red Guard was sent to search, it was as she had predicted.

When the Military Revolutionary Tribunal began its sittings, more than a hundred speculators were waiting to be put on trial. Peters told me that one day he was riding on a street-car, when the man sitting beside him engaged him in conversation. He offered to sell him twelve hundred bags of flour at two hundred and fifty

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rubles each, six thousand pounds of sugar, and some butter. Peters got him to write down his name and address, and within the hour he had been arrested and his supplies had been seized.

One large consignment of flour was found hidden beneath the birch-wood logs in a barge on the Moika Canal supposed to contain nothing but wood.

Despite all efforts to unearth the offenders, a few men waxed hideously rich upon the hunger of the many. All provocation notwithstanding, the guillotine remained simply a name. Wherever the death penalty was inflicted, it was done by mobs having no official sanction—by mobs aroused to an uncontrolled fury, and momentarily conscious of no other passion than that of reprisal. Considering the unsettled condition of government, such instances of violence were not so frequent as to change the character of the Revolution into that of a Reign of Terror.

CHAPTER XVII

THE GREAT GRAY WOLF

THE great gray wolf has always been howling at the Russian door.

When revolution was still only a vague dream of the future, an American traveler, finding his way into a peasant's hut in a remote Siberian village, discovered an American flour-sack hanging beside the ikon on the wall. The peasant's wife pointed to it, and with tears in her eyes explained that it was her most treasured possession. It came in the midst of the great famine, and brought the wheat that saved her babies' lives.

The March Revolution began with cries of "Bread! Bread! Give us bread!"

Vera, who took her place in the bread line at three o'clock in the morning, saw the wolf skulking in the shadowy dawn. Ivan, who went without his lunch because, even at the cheap working-man's restaurant in the Vyborg district, he must pay three rubles fifty for an insufficient meal, hears him growling.

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From February to February, the wolf howled; yet somehow each succeeding group of Russian administrators managed to keep him at bay. Always next week he was coming; but, somehow, miracles do happen in Russia, and he never quite arrived. It was not until he made an alliance with the human enemy of Russia that he finally broke through and brought death to the hungry people.

Three days after the Bolshevik Revolution, a fatherly American official advised me to buy some sardines and retire for the next two weeks to the home of a woman friend.

"The people will be dying of starvation on the streets within a week," he said, "and there won't be any *izvostchiks* to carry you around, because the horses will all starve to death."

How little we knew the Russians! It was six months before that prophecy began to be true. Long after the allotted two weeks, Roger Treadwell, the American consul, and I, returning from a visit to a sick countryman, raced the length of the great white Nevsky in a sleigh drawn by a wonderful black horse groomed and fed to the pink of condition, while the driver, a peacock

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feather rakishly nodding in his cap, shouted a challenge to another *izvostchik*.

The Russian seems to be always equal to the emergency of the moment. It is in organizing the daily round of living that he seems to fail. As soon as the Bolsheviki took command, they sent commissaries to the grain districts to persuade the peasants to send supplies to Petrograd. They pleaded the need of the Revolution, and were more successful in getting a response than their predecessors had been. They discovered in the first days that carloads of cabbages and potatoes were rotting in the warehouses for lack of people to unload and distribute them. They put soldiers and Red Guardsmen to work, and when bread was scarce the multitudes were appeased with an extra ration of vegetables.

It was impossible at any time during the year to buy any of the necessities of life without standing in a queue. There were queues for bread, sugar, kerosene, tobacco, goloshes, and sweets. If cheap cloth was received in any one of the shops, a line of women immediately appeared outside the door in quest of a bargain. After the

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fall of Riga, when the Germans were expected, queues formed in front of the trunk shops. The families who could afford it kept what they called "queue maids," who had no other occupation than to wait in line for provisions. In one of the "want ads" I found a request for a servant, stating, "For queue work only." It became a regular source of livelihood for many people. Children left school to stand in the queues. At first they liked it. It was exciting to go out so early in the mornings, and stand with many new people, but as the days grew colder their little hands and feet, ill-clad, made the waiting torture.

The great mass of Russians in the cities had to do their own queue duty, and they came with their babies and baskets in their arms, their heads done in shawls or kerchiefs, and stood for endless hours, waiting to present a ticket entitling them to buy a pound and a half of sugar or the day's ration of bread.

The rules of behavior in the queues were created by the people themselves. At first women who came with babies were allowed to go in without waiting. Then a woman who had no chil-

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dren hired her neighbor's child for ten or twenty kopecs. The trick was soon discovered, and the real mothers lost their privilege.

I frequently stopped to listen to the people in the queues, and to get a better idea of their attitude toward the various governments I sent Marya, my interpreter, to stand in the lines. Marya was a Russian student who at eighteen had more knowledge stored away in her little black head than the Western woman of forty. She told me that the character of the queues changed with the goods the people were buying; but the people themselves were always in opposition to the government. Each time a new government came in, they would say, "Maybe they will abolish the queues"; but a few days later, when the lines remained the same, they declared the new Cabinet was no better than the old.

"There is a Turkish saying," said Marya, "that it is no good for the world to be wide if my shoes are too narrow; and the women say: 'It is no good for the government to be Socialist if the queues grow longer every day.'"

The bread queues were made up of working-women, servants, a few students, and school-child-

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dren. The school-children brought their books and studied their lessons. When it was not too cold, the women brought needlework or crochet. A few read newspapers for the first time in their lives, having had no time at home. The high cost of living was the chief topic of discussion, and politics had little place here. As Marya wisely said:

“Mothers who are worrying about their babies left at home alone, and who are afraid to get no bread for them, don’t care for politics.”

The tobacco queues were made up largely of soldiers who were buying to sell again. They expected to make money, so their mood was better, and they laughed and joked as they stood waiting.

The chocolate queues were composed of men and women of the bourgeoisie who could afford to buy sweets. Conversation here was about the disorganization of the army, the roughness of the soldiers, their want of good manners, the Socialism that would ruin Russia, the impossibility of living in Petrograd now, and frequently a regret for the days of the régime, “when, at least, we had some order.”

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The kerosene queues were like the bread queues. They were made up of poor people letting rooms without electricity. The conversation was of hard times—perhaps of a grandmother who “eats much, but is not even able to stand in a queue.”

The theater-ticket queues, which became smaller as the bread lines grew larger, were composed of students and re-sellers. The students chatted gaily of the soprano of Z., or the feet of the ballerina X. The speculators did not talk at all, and the students treated them rather disdainfully.

The trunk queues were the strangest of all. Marya described them as “respectable people whom fear has obliged to forget their respectableness.” She said it was universal, direct, equal, and open fear. They had completely lost their wits. They were afraid of Germans, of Socialists, of peasants, of soldiers. They feared to lose their peace, their comforts, and their lives. They feared to stay in Petrograd, and they feared equally to leave.

Marya was even more critical of the people who

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stood in queues waiting for the street-cars. She said that all civilization, good manners, and delicacy comes off when a Petrograd inhabitant wants to get into a car. The street-car queues were made up chiefly of teachers, clerks, business men, students, and small officials. They were cold, fearful of being late, and preoccupied. They buried themselves in their newspapers and seldom spoke.

Heaven help Vera and Ivan if their shoes followed in the footsteps of most shoes and wore out. To get a new pair, Ivan had to stay away from the factory for a whole day. In the evening, when the factory closed, he took his place in a long line on the Morskaya, and settled down to twenty-four hours of waiting. He borrowed a few wooden paving-blocks from the pile that was always waiting to patch up the holes in the street, and made himself as comfortable as the weather permitted. For the length of a block in either direction were hundreds just like him. All night he would sit there, chattering with his neighbor or dozing off to sleep. Sometime the next day he would be rewarded with—no, indeed;

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not a pair of shiny new boots, but simply a numbered ticket that entitled him a month later to take his place in line again and get his boots.

It was estimated that Russia's grain crops were only fifty to sixty per cent. of normal. At the time of the downfall of the Tsar forty per cent. of her locomotives and rolling stock was out of commission. For three years fifteen million of her men had been out of production. Russia's front had been mobilized without regard to her rear. The burden of feeding the fifteen million had fallen upon women, old men, children, and the young men who were not fit for military service. To overcome even partially this great loss of man-power, it would have been necessary to apply every possible kind of modern labor-saving device and obtain from the remaining workers the maximum of efficiency. Russia did neither of these two things.

Labor-saving machinery was not used to any great extent in the old days, because there was so little value put upon labor. Man-power was the cheapest thing to be had in Russia. The Russian worker had no stake in his job, and was as

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A peasant milkman and his customers. Milk was sold only on card to mothers with babies and for invalids





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In open-air bazaars where there is little to sell but many to buy, Russia does her marketing

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careless of time as the ruling class was careless of man-power.

The Russian's attitude toward his job was the attitude of the slave laborer—something done because it had to be done. The greatest flaw in his revolutionary teaching was that it had not given him a knowledge of the interdependence of people. He had not learned that the only way he could get his share of grain from the peasant was to make the cloth or the plow that was as necessary to the peasant and his wife as bread was necessary to him.

Nothing in the Russian system had helped to teach the worker his importance in the social scheme and his social responsibility as a producer. That was a thing he had to discover for himself. The leaders realized this, and the shop committees tried to make the men realize it; but it was the sort of thing that could be learned only through bitter experience.

Time was of so little value in Russia that nobody ever bothered to learn how to save it. Production naturally decreased steadily in the first three years of the war, and kept on decreasing after the Revolution. The shop committees did

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not make the confusion, but, like the committees in the army and in the fleet, they were outgrowths of the confusion that followed the fall of the Tsar, and the economic revolution that deposed the owner from his control over his factory. They were the effort of the men themselves to establish something that would bring order out of confusion. That they failed was due to lack of experience and not to lack of good intentions.

The gray wolf cared not how his hour came, only that it came.

Even the foreign colony, whose members were far better off than the Russians, heard the gray wolf howling. We were a hungry lot from morning until night. Most of us developed an appetite such as we had never known. We scraped the plates clean. The first time I dined with a man who put the left-over sugar in his pocket, I gasped. It was not until I had drunk many glasses of sugarless tea and eaten many breadless meals that I was able to overcome sufficiently the inhibitions of my early training to permit me to follow his example. Even to the end, I had a guilty sense of committing a horrible crime every time I whisked the last piece of black bread sur-

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reptitiously into my hand-bag. Usually, by dint of much scheming, I managed to keep a small quantity of food on hand for the hungry mortals who drifted through my little blue room each day. The original supply came with me in cans across Siberia from China, and it seemed to partake in its stretching quality of the nature of the widow's cruse.

On the mornings when there was breakfast, I ordered two portions, to have bread for afternoon tea and late suppers. Stewart P. Elliott, a fellow San Franciscan, was an American whom the colony will never forget. He was always turning up with life-savers in the shape of boxes of biscuits or cans of condensed milk. In December, when my supplies of sugar and tea were just about exhausted, Charles Smith, the new Associated Press correspondent, arrived from Peking with tea and crackers and all sorts of priceless possessions, including two cakes of soap and a box of talcum powder. So precious a gift I had never received before.

In Russia, one's room is one's castle. Visitors are never announced, and one must be prepared at all times for unexpected callers. The first

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time the hotel clerk sent an early-morning visitor up to discover me with an unmade bed, my prudish American instincts drove me in search of a screen. Once so camouflaged, I could ignore its presence in perfect calm.

Life was naked in Russia—bare as the arms of the silver birches before winter came to cover them up. All that was real, all that was vital,—the best and the worst of men,—lay close to the surface. Heroes have never appealed to me; but the amazing number of simple, unobtrusive virtues that the ordinary mortal can carry about his human person is a miracle that never ceases to thrill me. There is a bond between those of us who searched for values beneath the turmoil of the revolutionary year that would be hard to break. A broader base of friendship, a deeper comradeship, is building for men and women the world over in the stress of these days of living under the shadow of death and disaster. Perhaps it is one of the best things we shall save out of the wreck of the war.

We were a strange lot, we Americans. We divided naturally into two camps. Some of us were uncompromising idealists, and some prag-

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matists, and more were the usual complex mixture of both. Most of us took away from Russia what we brought. One of us brought the Columbia School of Journalism, and, no matter how revolution raged or food prices soared, Columbia's star remained undimmed.

A few men whose lives had been cast in entirely different places saw a new vision, and they will never be the same again. Colonel Thompson was one of these. The real test of his interest in Russia came one day soon after the fall of the Keren-sky government, upon which he had banked all his hopes.

"I've been out walking around the streets today and looking into the faces of the Red Guard," he said. "They've got fine faces. They're real—they're sincere. Perhaps these people need us now more than ever."

It was a long journey for a Wall Street millionaire.

There was another American, a New York banker, as fine a type as I have ever met. The Russian struggle thrilled him as nothing else had ever done.

"I never wanted anything so much in my life

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as I want to help Russia," he said. "If I were thirty years old and had no family, nothing on earth would take me away from here."

I did not know until I had returned to America just how deeply the Russian Revolution had gone with him. He went to his firm and told them he was no longer of any use to them. "I'm not interested in the same things," he said. Soon afterward he went to France to do a piece of humanitarian work for the government.

Everywhere, day and night, we fought the endless battle of revolution.

"You do not know the Russians," said the old residents, shaking their heads at those of us who professed to find something more vital than German money at work among the masses. "If you had lived here as long as we have—"

"That's just it," we replied; "you have lived here too long. Your roots are buried too deep in Russia's past. You see the Russians as slaves. You can not see them as human beings."

It raged across tea-tables in the charming apartment of the naval attaché, where we gathered occasionally to eat the tiny hot white rolls which, wolf or no wolf, found their way to Mrs.

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Crosley's tea-tray every Thursday afternoon. It stormed around General Judson's dinner-table. We carried it into the Turkish Room, where we curled up on the great wide Russian divan for coffee, and upstairs to the shiny ball-room, where we one-stepped and waltzed to an American phonograph.

As prophets the old residents were hopeless failures. They were always backing a "man on horseback," or setting a date for the restoration of the monarchy, then moving it up a week or two as time found their predictions unfulfilled.

If Petrograd offered no sensation for a day, there was always Captain Harry Brown's communiqué to give us a real thrill. Captain Brown was an oldtime New York newspaper man attached to the Red Cross Mission, and he wrote for an exclusive circulation a daily summary of all the rumors that came in from all parts of Russia. Neither truth nor fiction could ever rival those documents for interest. They were an amazing combination of both.

There was much good talk in my little blue room. All kinds of people found their way there. Every shade of political opinion was expressed.

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Most often it was of Russia we talked, but sometimes we wandered far, far away. The fight we fought so good-naturedly was the same that is being fought on the battlefield of the world—the struggle of the old and the new.

One night the Baltic states was the topic, and there was a Czech whose burning spirit would have withered the Kaiser if we could only have produced him at that moment:

“No matter who makes peace, the Czechos Slavs will go on fighting until they give us back our country,” he said. “We are attacking from four directions, and we are going straight to Berlin. We’re going to get the Kaiser; and when we get him, we’ll feed him on pigs’ liver—raw—half a pound a day.”

Another night we listened to a handsome young Serb who was trying to help the Russian radicals make Socialists of the Austrian prisoners and organize them to resist German attacks on Russia. There had been a meeting of the Austrian prisoners that day in the Cirque Modern, and two thousand of them had pledged themselves to defend the Russian Revolution against a German attack, and to work to get revolution-

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ary propaganda to the German and Austrian trenches.

Sometimes it was Raymond Robins who held our attention, and no one saw better than Raymond Robins the significance of Russia's place in the future settlement of the international problem. He knew that, from a practical as well as an ethical viewpoint, the Allies must not abandon Russia to the Germans. Most often the talk turned to the necessity for making the people at home understand the complex and difficult situation as it really is.

Sometimes it was Arthur Ransom, the English writer, who said things that any of us would like to have said—fine, true, penetrating things, like a flashlight in dark places. He had lived a long time in Russia, and had wandered over the country in a cart, learning the stories of the land from Cossacks with whom he camped on the roadside, and from peasants who lit their samovars for him.

Frequently there came a knock that brought us promptly back to the moment. Late one night John Reed came in to announce that they were shooting in the Winter Palace Square.

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The wine-cellars of the Tsar had been broken open, and a new danger was facing the Soviet government.

Another menace had come to Petrograd, for the moment more threatening even than the gray wolf. Unknown to all of us, a sleeping serpent had been lying beneath the city's surface, waiting for the hour to stir and strike. The city was mined with wine-cellars, and the forces working to prevent any government of the people from succeeding in the restoration of order took advantage of them.

The Revolutionary Committee discovered eight hundred such places. In one wine vault alone there were twelve hundred thousand bottles. In the Tsar's cellar the champagne had lain undisturbed for three hundred years. The wine in the cellars at the Winter Palace was valued at thirty million rubles. The government of People's Commissaries, desperately in need of foreign credits, thought first of trying to sell it to England and America. Some of the members opposed this.

Just after the trouble began, I went to the office of Jacob Peters, and found him and the

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Military Revolutionary Committee frantically trying to devise some way to meet the crisis. They realized that all that was needed to bring a real reign of terror to the city was to madden the soldiers with drink.

While I talked to Peters, the telephone bell on his desk kept interrupting. Each time he took down the receiver, it was to discover that trouble had broken out in some new and unexpected part of the city. He was pale and worried.

"I don't know what to do," he said. "I was afraid of this, and I voted to put the wine in the Neva; but we needed money so badly, some of the others thought it was a shame to destroy it. The sailors were going to load it on the barges and take it to Kronstadt to keep until we could send it away. But provokators told the soldiers the sailors were taking it to drink. Now we are going to break the bottles, and pump out the cellars, and finish with it all."

It was harder to do than to say. For weeks afterward they kept discovering more and more wine-cellars.

The wine pogroms seem always to have started

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in the same way. Some unknown person would telephone to a hospital where there were convalescing soldiers, or to a barracks in the neighborhood, and announce that there was free wine to be had at such and such an address. As the crowd began to gather, there was usually some one in the street with a few bottles of wine to get things started. Before long the soldiers were demanding wine and more wine. Some one conveniently broke in the door, or perhaps an irate proprietor in opposition to the Soviet government invited them in to help themselves. Frequently, before the disturbance was quelled, there was shooting.

The People's Commissaries went systematically to work to find all the cellars. Wherever they discovered one, they sent in a group of trusted soldiers and Red Guardsmen whose revolutionary spirit was sufficiently strong to withstand the temptation of the liquor, to smash the bottles.

One afternoon I was motoring over on the Petrograd side of the Neva, when I passed a big public garden. A guard of soldiers had been placed around the entrance to warn all passers-by

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to walk in the street. A fire-engine was busily pumping. At first I thought it was a fire, but I saw neither smoke nor flames. I got out of the car, and asked one of the guards what was happening. He told me they were smashing three hundred thousand bottles and pumping the wine out with the fire-engine.

From a back entrance two soldiers came with a third whose steps were suspiciously unsteady. His companions, leading him off to arrest, were pouring a volley of abuse upon him, accusing him in picturesque language of being a traitor to the Revolution and several kinds of good-for-nothing with which only the Russians are familiar. The man had slipped in through the back gate when no one was looking. The young soldier in command of the crowd ordered that an extra guard be placed at the gate and no one allowed to pass.

They did their work in the same way all over the city. But new wine-cellars came to light faster than they could destroy them, and before the dragon was finally slain several poor deluded fellows lost their lives. The night the Winter Palace cellars were broken into, we thought the whole populace was going to be killed; but it

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later developed that the sounds we had taken for shots were nothing more fatal than popping corks, and the soldiers who lay on the white snow were not dead, but merely dead drunk.

This method of provocation was not new in Russia. It had been used in the old days by the Black Hundred, and in the retreat from the southwestern front the Germans resorted to it. They captured a town, stocked the houses with liquor, and retreated again. When they had gone, the Russian soldiers drank the wine, and the horror of outrages committed in the debauch that followed was one of the most tragic things in those unhappy July days. When havoc was complete, the Germans came with cameras and made photographs, which were sent back to Berlin for propaganda purposes.

CHAPTER XVIII

TSARS AND PEASANTS

WHEN the peasants in a remote South Russian village received word from the great city that the "Little Father" had been put off his throne, and that they, the Russian people, were now the rulers of the land, they shook their heads skeptically.

The message that brought the news invited them to send delegates to a congress of workmen, soldiers, and peasants in the far-away capital. Some were for doing it; others counseled differently. Finally they hit upon a plan that satisfied every one. They elected the most disreputable of the village characters to go to Petrograd.

"But why—" asked the bewildered squire of the big estate—"why did you choose these? Semon is a thief, and—"

"Once before they fooled us," explained the peasant spokesman. "It may be true that the Tsar is no longer the ruler of Russia, but it may

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be just another trick. In 1905 they told us to send delegates to Petrograd, and what did they do? They put our people in prison. If this is a trick, they will put the thieves in jail and we will be well rid of them. If it is the truth, we can send others to take their places.”

Out on the banks of the ice-bound Yenesei, up on the northern edge of Archangel, down on the Bessarabian plain—all over the great white land—little handfuls of peasants, bundled up in their fur-lined *shubas*, were putting their canny caution to work on this thing that was said to have happened in the City of Peter.

It was a caution born of years filled with slaughtered hopes and broken promises. All over Russia men and women eager to believe in the dawn of freedom were fortifying themselves, in one way or another, against a recurrence of the disappointments of the past.

To the peasant, revolution means land, freedom means land. He knows land. He wants land. He thinks in terms of land. Land means food for his children, warmer *shubas* for himself, and education for the next generation. Land means life.

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No revolutionary party that did not make land to the peasants the first plank in its platform could hope to survive in Russia. Ever since Alexander freed the serfs, the peasant has believed himself the rightful owner of the land. Under serfdom the land-owners dictated the entire terms of living of the peasants. They were flogged, sent to military service, and even forced into unwelcome marriages, as punishment for trivial offenses. Even when they were exemplary in the eyes of their owners, their right to marry as they chose was subject to the whim or the economic advantage of their owner. In return for their services upon the estate of the land-owner, the serfs were allowed a certain amount of land from which to take their own living. It was to the advantage of the landlords to feed his serfs sufficient to keep them in good condition for their service to him.

After the serfs were freed, the situation changed. The peasants, instead of receiving the land from which they were used to making their living, frequently received inferior land and a smaller quantity. Their bodies were free, but they found themselves economically more com-

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pletely enslaved than they had been before. Their bitterness grew. In the early seventies there were agrarian uprisings in which bands of peasants burned the estates of the landlords. The landlord became the hereditary enemy, and the burning of his estate, which they regarded as their own, their habitual form of protest.

As soon as the peasants were convinced that a real revolution had taken place in Petrograd, they began demanding their land; and, since its distribution was delayed, they began to take it.

Many involved schemes of distribution were advocated by various groups. A minority believed in compensating the landlords, but the majority asked: "What is the use to pay for that which belongs to us? Why should we reward them for keeping us all these years from our own?"

The land program of the social revolutionists was the one that best met the demand of the mass of peasants, and they flocked to support it. After the success of the Bolshevist Revolution the right Social Revolutionists accused the Bolsheviks of having stolen their land program. Lenin and Trotzky replied that the plan of the

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Bolsheviki was to apply everything that was good, regardless of its origin.

How to capture and hold the support of the peasant was the chief problem of every revolutionary leader in Russia. The story of Nicholas Tchaikovsky, called the Grandfather of the Russian Revolution, who formed the first peasants' council, is typical of the struggle. Tchaikovsky is one of the three survivors of the first revolutionary group. Before the March Revolution, Tchaikovsky, who had spent most of his life in exile or in prison, had made temporary peace with the government for the purpose of helping to win the war. He was working behind the lines along the front, establishing agricultural committees to sow the deserted land. When Rodzianko's proclamation declaring the abdication of the Tsar reached him, he started immediately for Petrograd. He joined the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies, but found himself entirely out of place there. He shook his fine old white head as he told me about it.

"I believed," he said, "as I do now, that the defense of the country was the first consideration.

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Whenever I mentioned the war, they answered that the English and French bankers were the only ones who wanted the war to continue, and that the French and English people were as eager for peace as they were. Having lived in England for twenty-eight years, I knew better. I could not sleep. I lost my temper. They laughed at me. I found myself a reactionary, an imperialist. After three weeks I decided I could stand it no longer, and asked them to send a more patient delegate to take my place.

“I started to work to create a council of peasants to bring in a more sensible current. Delegates from twenty-seven provinces came, and on May 4 the council was held. There were thirteen hundred and sixty delegates, and a Central Executive Committee of two hundred and fifty members remained in Petrograd to carry on the work. About a hundred of these kept going back and forth to the provinces; but every time they came back they reported that the Bolshevik influence had swept through the local peasant councils, and they found themselves entirely out of the trend. Some of them became Bolsheviks. The others could not stem the tide, and soon we

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found that the peasants had a great distrust of the Central Executive Committee. What are we to do now?" he said. "I don't know."

Tchaikovsky was utterly at sea. Fine, brilliant old idealist that he was, he could neither control nor understand the course of the Russian mass. His executive committee was completely repudiated, and all he could do was to shake his head. His last hope was the Council of the Republic; and when that was disbanded by order of the Bolsheviki he was in despair. He came one day to a meeting of the railroad workers, where he made a speech of protest against the Council of People's Commissaries, and threatened them with terroristic methods. His long beard shaking, his kind eyes aflame, he lifted his clenched fists and shouted:

"We know how to use the terror against tyrants. We have used it in the past, and we will use it again."

I went to three national peasants' conventions in Petrograd, another in Moscow. They started peacefully enough, but before they were over, the bearded men from the far-away places were shaking their fists in one another's faces, and gen-

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erally it ended with the majority going over to the left and the minority starting another convention all its own. Old Nicholas Tchaikovsky was left behind early in the struggle, and the contest for control of the peasants rested with Chernoff and Marie Spiridonova.

Soon after the Bolshevist Revolution, the peasants met in national convention, and there were stormy days and nights before the majority finally recognized the government of the People's Commissaries and elected delegates to the National Council of the All-Russian Soviet. The peasants stated the terms upon which they would enter the Soviet. Trotzky and Lenin at first fought compromise on those terms. The peasants said they would enter the convention if they were given a representation of a hundred and eight members, but would accept nothing less than this, which was a number equal to that of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils.

The agreement on the peasants' terms was reached one morning at three o'clock, and the next day a great celebration took place. The Pavlovski regiment was chosen as honorary escort to the incoming delegates, and marched to

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the headquarters of the Executive Committee of the Peasants' Soviets. They were joined by a great crowd of sailors, Red Guardsmen, and women. They marched with red banners, singing and cheering as they went.

At Smolney they crowded into the great auditorium, and packed the halls. They overflowed into the courtyard, and hundreds of them who could not get in held an impromptu meeting outside. They called it the Marriage Day of Revolution, and one patriarchal peasant well over his threescore and ten, with snowy hair and ruddy cheeks, a typical villager whose language was the crudely picturesque dialect of his *gubernia*, said:

"I was not walking to Smolney to-day. I was carried through the air on the wings of my enthusiasm."

His name was Stackhoff, and there were still stranger days in store for him; for they were to put him on a train and whisk him away into the land of the Germans to take part in the armistice negotiations at Brest-Litovsk.

"We are all used to seeing young men fighting," said a factory worker, thrilled by the words

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of the aged peasant; "but when we see such spirit and determination in the old, Russia can not perish."

"Who will dare now to raise a threat against our Revolution, when it is defended by the masters of the land and the masters of the arms?" asked another.

Through the summer and winter the peasants kept flocking to Petrograd. Sometimes they were sent as delegates to a convention. Quite as often they came from some far-away province, sent by their fellow villagers to find out what was really going on in Russia.

The case of Mikhail Ivanovitch was typical. The gubernia where Mikhail lived was hundreds of versts from Petrograd. Mikhail had never been farther away from his little thatched hut than the distance of a fair day's drive, there and back, for his sturdy Siberian pony. It was seven days after the overthrow of the Tsar before Mikhail knew there had been a revolution in Petrograd. The Korniloff fiasco had been replaced by a new crisis in the surging capitol before Mikhail and his friends put their heads to work on the tangled mystery. Eight months passed, and he

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and his neighbors were still groping about in the dark. They wanted to play their part, but they did n't know what to do. When news of the Bolshevik Revolution finally arrived, they made up their minds that Mikhail must go to Petrograd and find some one who would come back and tell them all about it.

There came a day when Mikhail stood up in the great white hall in Smolney, his voice trembling with excitement and his blue eyes, under the sun-bleached bangs of brown hair, wide with wonder.

"I came from far away," he said. "We are dark there—very dark. We want to do the right thing, but we don't understand. You must send some one to tell us. We will pay—the money does not matter. The revolution came, and they told us the 'Little Father' was no longer here. They told us we would have land and peace and implements for our farms. The same officials were still in the same offices, but instead of being cross and brutal to us they were polite to us now; yet they refused what we wanted just the same, and things did not get done any better than before. We were still poor, and they kept our

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land. Then you made a revolution. The officials were a little more polite, but that was all the difference."

Mikhail hesitated for a moment, hunting for words.

"I know things have changed," he said, "because it used to be that one could hardly even look at a palace, and now I may look at all the palaces as long as I like. I may go inside, and they tell me that I may even see Tsar Lenin himself."

Mikhail was the first of the peasants who had called Lenin "Tsar," and his audience roared with delight. They appointed a committee to take him to see the chief of the People's Commissaries, and when they sent him back to his *gubernia* there was little he did not know about the wild ways of revolution.

The Russian peasant is locally minded, and tied all his life to his one little patch of earth. He has thought little of Russia as a whole. Patriotism, as the French peasant knows it, is quite foreign in Russia. It was as easy for the Russian peasant to accept the doctrine of internationalism as that of nationalism. The Bolshevik

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idea of a community Soviet, electing delegates to a national Soviet, which could in turn elect delegates to an international Soviet forming the brotherhood of the peoples of all the world, appealed to his need for local self-government, and gave him at the same time a large ideal. It took little more effort to conceive oneself as belonging to a world than it took to imagine oneself part of an empire as vast as Russia.

Even the city workers have a strong pull back to the soil. Many of them work in the factories in the winter, and return to the villages to help harvest the crops in summer. A friend of mine asked an *izvostchik* where he came from.

"I am one of Count Cherimesoff's peasants," he said.

"How long have you been in Petrograd?" my friend questioned.

"Thirty-five years," he answered.

After thirty-five years he still thought of himself, not only as a peasant, but as the property of a particular estate.

I once said to a peasant from the government of Pskoff:

"Are you a Russian?"

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"No; we are Pskovians."

A hungry student, who went to Pskoff during the holidays for the purpose of getting enough to eat, visited the local Peasants' Council. The business before the meeting had to do with a drunken member. He had been drinking *hunja*, a home-made substitute for vodka, and was captured with a bottle of it in his possession. The council discussed his case, and wrote a paper to send to the committee whose business it was to handle such offenders. It takes much time to write a paper at a peasants' meeting, and while it was being compiled the bottle, which was to have been offered as evidence, was emptied of its contents. An investigation was made, and it was found that one of the peasants had drunk it. The council debated some minutes, then wrote at the bottom of the paper:

"The *hunja* being taken by Stepanoff, he is added to above-mentioned bottle and man, and sent to the committee."

The local Peasants' Soviets were not always as expeditious as an efficiency age might demand; but usually there was a crude, simple justice in their decisions that was unknown in the days

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when their destinies were decided by the high-handed officers of the Tsar.

Most of the land-owners insisted that the peasant was at heart bourgeois, and that his interest in revolution would cease as soon as he got his land. Not long after the Bolshevik Revolution, I talked one day with one of the former secretaries in the Foreign Office. He was managing the strike of the employees of the various ministries against the Soviet government, and explained an elaborate scheme by which he and his associates expected to cut off the grain districts of the south and starve the revolutionary masses of the cities into submission.

"The Bolsheviks," he said, "are our real enemies. We don't care about the theoretical Socialists—they just talk. But with the Bolsheviks it is a fight to a finish, and of course in the long run it can result only one way. When the soldier peasant returns to his earth and his family, he will become bourgeois. The peasant does not want to own land, as the Socialists want it. He wants his own private property. Eventually he will be on our side."

Many of the revolutionists shared the same be-

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lief about the peasants; but thus far they had proved as Nicholas Tchaikovsky said—as radical as the city workers.

The greatest difficulty that each succeeding government experienced was that of making the peasants give up their grain. They wanted plows, cotton for their looms, shoes for themselves and their children; and the rubles they received had depreciated so greatly in value that they had no purchasing power. The peasants looked upon them as so many scraps of worthless paper.

A Russian who had two estates down in the south told me of an excursion that he made to the government of Chernigoff in September. He went there to try to induce the peasants to sell their grain to the army.

“There was one village,” said he, “where there were two thousand inhabitants. It was in the heart of the rich grain country. Since the previous December no official had been allowed to enter the village. The people had isolated themselves from the rest of Russia, and officials remained away under threat of being killed. I went alone on horseback, with a rifle and some

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ammunition. As I neared the place I saw the villagers coming out to meet me. I told them they must give bread to the army, which was in danger of starving at the front. I made what I thought was a forcible plea. When I finished, an old gray-haired peasant, who seemed to be the spokesman of the crowd, said:

“ ‘That ’s all very clever talk, but now listen to what we have to say. You want our bread. You offer to give us five rubles a *pood* (forty pounds). What is five rubles to us? We want to buy shoes. For shoes we must pay a hundred rubles. We will keep our grain.’

“ ‘All right,’ I answered. ‘If you want to keep your grain you can keep it; but you need petrol, and sugar for your tea, and iron for your plows. If you do not give us grain we will not give you these.’

“The old peasant smiled and beckoned me to follow him. He led me to a window where a couple of crude pine torches cut from a near-by wood had been placed.

“ ‘Those were the lights our grandfathers used,’ he said. ‘They are good enough for us. You can keep your petrol.’

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“ ‘But sugar—you must have sugar for your tea.’

“ ‘Our grandfathers needed no sugar for their tea. They got along without tea, and they had as much bread as we have.’

“ ‘What about iron for your plows?’ I asked. Sure, here at any rate I had him stumped.

“ ‘He led me to a shed at the back of his house, and showed me a small, primitive, old-fashioned *sochar* plow, in use now only in the most backward sections.


“ ‘Do you see that blade?’ he asked. ‘Our fathers used those, and they had bread. There’s enough steel on the old plows in the village to make new plows to last four years. You can keep your petrol and your sugar and your iron,’ he said triumphantly.

“ ‘You know,’ I said, playing my trump card, ‘we can bring troops down here and force you to give up your grain for the good of your country.’

“ ‘Yes, of course,’ he said. ‘We are only two thousand, and if you brought a whole regiment you could beat us. But we will recall our own peasants from the front, and when they come, do

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Under the thatched roofs in villages like this one hundred and twenty million
Russian peasants make their home



Katherine Breshkovskaya and her two aged comrades, Lazareff (center) and Nicholas Tchaikowsky, with her American friends, Col. William B. Thompson (lower left) and Col. Raymond Robins

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Soldiers' wives on the Nevsky demonstrating for increased allowance

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you suppose they will fight for you? No, they will fight for us.'

"It was no use—all threats had failed. I tried persuasion.

" 'But please, please,' I said. 'Your brothers are starving—please give us some grain for the army.'

" 'Yes,' he said; 'we will give you bread. We will give you two thousand *poods* of bread for our brothers at the front.'

" 'We will be glad to pay you—' I began.

"He interrupted.

" 'No,' he said; 'it is a present—we will not sell you bread. We have no use for your rubles. They are scraps of paper.' "

The same official told me that he had visited the village of Radouel, and found the people without bread, while two kilometers away the peasants were feeding bread to the pigs and selling the pigs for lard.

"Why should we sell bread for five rubles a *pood*, when we can get a hundred and twenty rubles a *pood* for pork fat?" the peasants asked.

Price-fixing on grain in Russia had no good results. The peasant who could neither read nor

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write knew enough to realize that money is paper when its purchasing power is gone. Unless it could be transmuted into farm implements, it was of less value to him than his grain.

The dream of the Soviets was communally owned modern farm machinery that would lift Russian agriculture out of its primitive state and lessen the dreary drudgery of the peasant's desperate struggle for life.

No one who has not seen those peasant homes can know the sordidness of that struggle. Often the live stock, which was the peasants' entire fortune, shared the same roof with the family. In one peasant hut I found the cow occupying the most comfortable corner of the room. I picked my way to the door through a barn-yard full of oozing black mud and refuse. A flock of chickens ran in and out, leaving the marks of their feet on the floor; and the barefoot peasant's wife, on her frequent excursions to and fro, tracked the vile-smelling slush in with her. Plumbing there was none. Except in the big cities, there is none worthy of the name in Russia. The peasant's weekly steam bath is his one debauch of cleanliness.

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Every village has its public bath. In the more primitive ones, a fire is built in a Russian stove. When the stones are thoroughly heated, tubs of water are thrown over them, and the steam pours forth. The bathers, after a good scrubbing, climb up on the wooden shelves that are built in tiers along the walls, and enjoy a thorough steaming. The fires are kept burning, and occasionally one of the bathers throws a fresh dipper of water on the stones.

The samovar was frequently the one luxury. In the days before the vodka prohibition, the white liquor was the peasant's only escape from the sordidness of life. It was a poor escape, because it meant that his wife and children paid with greater misery for his momentary relief. The unhappy peasant, harassed by political and economic oppression, did what miserable people do the world over—tried to make some one else miserable. Usually the peasant took it out on his wife, who in turn took it out on the children. Given the least opportunity, the Russian is the kindest, simplest, happiest soul in the world. Illiterate as he is, he frequently reveals a deeper wisdom than his more fortunate brothers over-

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seas. We can teach him plumbing and tilling and business management. We can help him to a knowledge of things that grow between the covers of books. But we can learn from him also—those truths that are minted in misery, those truths that come out of the depths of the forest and off the vast silent spaces of the steppe, into the soul of a man.

CHAPTER XIX

WOMEN IN THE REVOLUTION

THERE was no feminist movement in Russia.

People usually become class-conscious in response to class oppression. In the old days in Russia the rights of women were slightly fewer than those of men, but the difference was so small as to be negligible. Their separate grievance as a class was swallowed up in the greater grievance of the mass. Russia's struggle was the struggle of human beings as human beings, rather than human beings as males or females.

In the days of the terrorists, women claimed the right to throw bombs as well as men. It was granted them. With equal generosity, the government rewarded them with hard labor, exile in Siberia, and even hanging. They spent their strength and their blood as lavishly, as recklessly, as courageously, as any of their brother Nihilists.

When freedom came to Russia, no one questioned the right of women to share it. Instead

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of becoming feminists, they became Cadets, Social Revolutionists, Mensheviki, Maximalists, Bolsheviki, Internationalists, or attached themselves to one or another of the parties and shadows of parties.

Here, as elsewhere, governmental honors were largely to the male; but the mundane business of making the world of meat and drink was largely left to women. Women in Russia do what women of the Western world do. At the big democratic convention in the Alexandrinski Theater, I counted the number of seats occupied by women. There were sixteen hundred delegates, and twenty-three of them were women. Many other women were in evidence, but they were behind the samovars, serving tea and caviar and sausage sandwiches. Some wore red armbands, ushered the men to their seats, took stenographic reports of proceedings, and counted ballots. It was so natural that it almost made me homesick.

Revolution did not lessen the burden that war had placed upon the back of the mass of Russian women. Increased disorganization of the country necessitated increased effort on the part of

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women to keep their families from starvation. They tilled the fields and tended the cattle; they swept the streets and mended the railway tracks, and stood for endless hours in front of the food-shops to get bread and milk for their babies. Their hopes were invested in the success of the Revolution just as firmly as those of their men, but they had less time for talking. They poured out of the factories to march, and once they were prepared even to fight. They were the silent heroines of revolution, as they had been of war; and, though they had much cause, they had little time for weeping.

Only five women climbed out of the mass to high seats of honor. They were Katherine Breshkovskaya, Marie Spiridonova, Countess Panina, Alexandria Kolontai, and Madame Bitsenko.

The age has produced no finer spirit in any land than that of the wonderful old Babushka (Grandmother) of the Revolution. The heights of joy and the depths of disappointment have been hers during the year; but she has remained, in spite of everything, the big, strong, steady soul who survived half a century and more of per-

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secution that Russia might be free. Her long revolutionary life has been filled with every conceivable kind of suffering, but she never for a moment lost faith in the ultimate success of the cause to which she dedicated herself.

When the Revolution came, she was in exile in Siberia, and they brought her home and gave her a reception such as no queen has ever known. They took her protesting to the Winter Palace, and installed her there. She insisted on the tiniest little room to be found in the great building, and asked to be allowed to live in the simplicity she had always known. Her door swung always on a friendly hinge, and it was in this room, sitting behind a big flat-topped mahogany desk, that I first met her. She was seventy-three years old; but by the light in her eyes, the ring in her voice, and the courage in her soul, she appeared to me to be the youngest, the strongest, and perhaps the sanest person I had found in Petrograd.

An odd procession tramped up and down the marble staircase to place its hopes and fears in the crucible of her wise old head and her stout, kind old heart. Once I found her with a comrade of the old Siberian days, who came to her

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to mend his broken dream. He had fought and suffered for free Russia, and returned to find himself exiled anew to that saddest of all exiles. The young radicals spoke of him as "an old fogy," and said, with a meaningful smile, of the man who had clanged his chains across the prison floor through many dreary years: "He calls himself a Socialist." He came to the Babushka for a new faith in himself and tolerance of his accusers. She nodded, put a pair of motherly arms around him, and kissed him on both cheeks.

"Babushka knows. Have they not said that she was all very well for her day, but her day is done?"

When he had gone, she turned to me with a tiny sigh.

"It is a friend of mine," she said—"a man who was twenty years in prison. Yet he is strong, but men—I think they are not so strong as women. I think they can not suffer so much. They have not such stout hearts. They get discouraged."

Once a messenger from Kerensky interrupted us with news of a mutiny in one of the regiments.

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"I must go immediately," she said, "and talk to these naughty boys who have been listening again to bad advice."

Another time an invitation from the American Red Cross came.

"Of course I will go to my dear Americans," she said, "and spend the whole afternoon if they want me."

We had no better friend in all of Russia. She loved America and Americans, and never tired of talking of her experiences in our country. She asked about Jane Addams, and Alice Stone Blackwell, Ernest Poole, and Arthur Bullard.

"They were all so good to me," she said. "While I was in Siberia they sent me papers and letters. Not once did they forget me. That is how I learned to speak the English. I do not speak it very well."

I asked what America could do to help Russia.

"Never let us alone," she answered. "We need you. All that you do now, do more. We need you much. Our dangers are from ourselves only. Our interior construction is very difficult. When the war is over, our hands will

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be quite free. But that is difficult too, for our soldiers are tired, and very, very dark. They do not understand the danger to Russia. The country is large, rich—very rich, but not enough civilize-ed,” she said. “We need aid—we need teachers. How to do it—that is the question.”

We talked of Russian women.

“They are very good, our women. But they are not active enough; they are not energetic,” she said. “Before it was always waiting—what will be permitted. We had no liberty to act by ourselves. Now, when we have liberty, we have not the experience. I can work because I fear nothing. I fear-ed nothing all my life. I have always worked. The initiative is a great thing. You have much of it, but the Russian women—the instinct and the moral forces are all right, but there is not the will to do.”

Every big and little problem of Russia lay heavily on the grandmother’s heart; but she refused to permit her vision of the future to be blurred by the tragedies of the present. From the days of her childhood as the daughter of a wealthy land-owner, through solitary confinement in the dungeon of the Fortress of Peter and

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Paul, and dreary years of hard labor on the Siberian steppes, her life has always been touched with consciousness of the sorrow of others.

“When I look back upon my past life, I can not remember a time when my child soul did not suffer at the contradiction between reality and the teachings of Christ,” she said. “As a tiny girl of five, my heart was always breaking for some one else. Now it was for the driver, now for the chamber-maid, now for the laborer. Sometimes it was those poor oppressed serfs. Always I have known that I would go safely through everything and see the bright days of freedom. Always I was listening for the ringing of the bells, and wondering that they kept me waiting.”

At the opening meeting of the Council of the Republic, I saw Kerensky place the gavel in her hands and ask her to be the first presiding officer. It was as gracious and beautiful a tribute as has ever been paid to woman anywhere; and the old grandmother, a white kerchief over her snowy curls and another around her neck, graced her position.

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I saw Babushka for the last time just before the fall of the Kerensky government. Immediately afterward she went into retirement. Stories of her arrest were spread broadcast over the world, but they were not true. The young revolutionists, though they differed from her politically, had far too profound a feeling of respect for her down in their hearts to harm her. She lived quietly in Petrograd for a time, on the fifth floor of an apartment-house. Later she went to Moscow.

I left Russia without seeing Babushka, but I learned that she was safe, and I knew that, in spite of disappointments, she was adjusting herself to the changed conditions and holding the faith that her country can not be permanently enslaved by a kaiser any more than it could be by a tsar.

Except for their courage and their revolutionary faith, no two women could be much more unlike than Breshkovskaya and little Marie Spiridonova.

If the annals of the Bolshevik government are truly written, they will record many a night when Marie Spiridonova and Nicolai Lenin matched

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wits and followers in the great game of revolutionary politics. Less than five feet tall and considerably under ninety pounds, she was the smallest and frailest but one of the most powerful persons in that vast country—the Little General of peasant Russia.

I see her always as I saw her many times during this great red Russian year—against a background of masses upon masses of burly figures in dun-colored coats, her tiny hands waving frantically in the air while she shouted, with all the force and fire of a spirit of flame:

“Tavarischi! Tavarischi! Tiche, tiche!”
(Comrades! Comrades! Hush, hush!)

She rattled a futile little bell occasionally; but, in the midst of that clatter of dumb men who had suddenly found their tongues, its voice was like the bleat of a lamb.

She was as incongruous in those great crowds of hairy, horny sons of field and trench as the tinkling bell; yet she handled herself and her followers with the skill of a trained politician and the tact of a mother.

By all the laws of human limitations, she should be dead. She was sentenced to death by

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the order of the Tsar's government, when she was a girl only just barely awakened to a knowledge of the tragedy of life in her native Russia.

In her first twenty-four hours in prison she died a hundred deaths at the hands of the Cossack officers charged with the pleasant duty of torturing her. Still she lived on, and her tormentors paid quietly, swiftly, and unofficially with their lives for what they had done to her. Marie Spiridonova's companions had sworn that it should be so, and it was.

During ten years at hard labor in Siberia, death should have come to relieve her, but it did not.

When the news that Russia was free flashed across the steppes and into the vast white silences of northeastern Siberia, it found Marie Spiridonova alive and waiting.

Two bright red spots flamed on her thin cheek-bones, and her narrow chest was racked by a wicked cough. They brought her home to Petrograd and put her tenderly to bed in a refuge prepared for home-coming exiles—put her to bed to die.

Through the turbulent spring and summer she

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played her part in revolution from that narrow refugee cot. By fall she had become the central figure at every meeting of the peasants' delegates, who were pouring ceaselessly into Petrograd from all parts of Russia.

Her story begins thirty years ago, in the government of Tamboof. There, in a little house not far from the prison where she was afterward incarcerated, Marie lived with her mother and two sisters. She received unusual educational advantages, and planned to be a doctor; but as she grew older she became so engrossed in the sorrows of the Russian people that she gave up all thought of everything but revolution.

Tamboof was in the grip of a governor notorious even beyond the borders of his *gubernia* for his frightful cruelties. The peasants lived in hourly terror that he would set the Cossacks on them, order them flogged, or, worse still, burn their homes.

The stories of his cruelties mounted one upon the other; and to Marie Spiridonova, brooding over them, it seemed that she and this man could no longer breathe the air of the same earth.

They both chanced to be in a certain small vil-

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lage when a peasant girl was captured, submitted to frightful outrage by a band of Cossacks, and finally thrown into a lake.

The governor knew. He neither hindered nor punished. It was too much. There was one pair of violet eyes in the village that night that did not close. Marie Spiridonova lay awake until morning, and by morning she knew what she must do. She obtained a revolver. She found the governor of Tamboof at the railway station, with his Cossack guard. She fired five fatal shots before the Cossacks, with drawn swords, closed in on her. She saw them coming, and tried to take her own life, but they were too quick. They hurled her to the sidewalk, calling to each other to "Strike her! Slash her!" They dragged her down the steps, her head bumping as she went, and lifted her by her long brown braids into an *izvostchik*.

In the jail she was stripped and flogged and taunted with shouts of "Now, then, deliver us a thrilling speech!" They burned her body with lighted cigarettes, and stamped on her little feet with their heavy boots. When other forms of torture bored them, they kicked her back and

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forth across the cell from one to another like a football, shouting: "Now, then, tell us who your comrades are!" or, "Cry out then, you wretch, if you don't like it!"

Marie Spiridonova did not cry out. She delivered no thrilling speeches. She spoke no comrade's name. That is not the stuff of which the Russian Revolution was made.

The next night they took her back to Tamboof. Much of the time she was mercifully senseless, and remembers vaguely as a series of horrible nightmares her brief intervals of consciousness. They tried her, and sentenced her to death, and when they asked her on the day of judgment if she had anything to say for herself, she replied:

"I am about to be sent from this life. You may kill me over and over again, as you have already done. You may subject me to the most horrible penalties. But you can add nothing to what I have already endured. I do not fear death. You may kill my body, but you can not destroy my belief that the hour of the people's freedom and happiness is coming."

The story of Marie Spiridonova rang from one

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part of the world to the other. It made little difference what the governor or the Tsar did to her, for in that hour the Russian people enthroned her in their hearts. Her youth, the depth of her passion, her tiny, frail, girlish form,—even her name itself,—became a pledge-word by which men swore that Russia should be free.

In France they formed a league to save her, and England and America were quickly aroused to pity and to action. Perhaps because of the storm of protest at home and abroad, the death sentence was commuted to hard labor in Siberia. Marie Spiridonova asked no mercy for herself. She rejected personal pity.

“If the people of America are interested in the fate of this Russian girl, tell them they must rather interest themselves in the fatherland of this girl,” she said. “I want nothing personally, because for a long time I have not existed personally. My heart and my soul are given to the cause of the people.”

It is so with all the Russian revolutionists. Theirs is a movement of ideas rather than of individuals. They shrink from discussing them-

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selves as individuals, and prefer always to dwell upon the cause for which they fight.

In spite of this, the life of a revolutionist goes on in much the same channels as that of other people. They have their personal joys and sorrows, their great loves and little hates, their happiness and their own small individual heartbreaks. Marie Spiridonova was no exception to this rule. While she was in exile she met Alexander Dekonsky, a revolutionist from south Russia. He was young like herself, and apparently as full of revolutionary fire. They had their cause in common, and youth and life and loneliness. They fell in love.

In the prison where Marie Spiridonova was incarcerated there were nine other women politicals. When the news came that Russia was free, the order of release contained the names of only eight of them. The jailer read them slowly, and the women looked from one to another with faces of joyful unbelief. The impossible was a fact. The thing for which they had dreamed and worked and suffered, and for which many of their comrades had already died, had happened. The jailer came to the end of the list.

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Two sharp streaks of pain appeared in the eyes of the two neglected ones. With trembling lips they spoke.

"What about us?" they asked forlornly.

The jailer shook his head. He was going to take no chances. The Revolution might not be such a success as it appeared. He would wait for other advices.

"You stay," he answered.

"Then none of us will go!" said Marie Spiridonova, with one of those impulsive decisions characteristic of her.

They settled back to more waiting; but the prison walls that day could not keep down their bounding spirits or shadow their joy.

The next day a second telegram arrived, ordering the release of the two neglected ones, and the ten started joyfully on their pilgrimage to Petrograd.

Their journey was a triumphal procession through the length of Siberia. No other but Babushka received such a welcome as that which the people gave to this slip of a girl who had won the distinction of being the most famous and most loved of all the "Terrorists" of Russia.

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She needed all the love and sympathy that Russia could give her, for she was soon to bear a greater torture than any that gendarmes or Cossack officers had been able to invent for her.

When the records of the *Okhranka* (the secret police) were captured, they contained the names of the spies and *provokators* who for years had been masquerading as revolutionists only that they might betray their comrades to the agents of the Tsar. The name of Alexander Dekonsky was on the list. According to the records, there was documentary evidence to prove that he was the chief *provokator* of all the great South Russian district, and that many revolutionists had paid with their lives on the gallows for their faith and friendship for him. Marie Spiridonova was sick in bed when they told her the news. Dekonsky had been arrested by the Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies at Odessa, and was imprisoned there.

Once again death crept close to the frail form of Marie Spiridonova, and once again death refused to release her. She lived through this as she lived through other tragedies. For three weeks she hid herself away from all her old

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friends. During this time Dekonsky escaped from prison. Many Russians believe that he was released by his guards at the request of his sweetheart of Siberian days. When Marie Spiridonova once more appeared in Petrograd, she gave out a public statement in which she declared Dekonsky innocent; then she threw herself more intensely than ever into the Revolutionary struggle.

I met her first at the Democratic Convention in the Alexandrinsky Theater. She sat in the front row, surrounded, as always, by men whose huge bulk emphasized her smallness. Her hair was done in two braids, wrapped around her face, and pulled rather low on her forehead to hide the scars the Cossack officers had left there. She wore, as always, a severe blue serge dress with a turnover collar of white lawn, and the severity of her clothes accentuated the Quaker look of her. The red spots burned brighter than ever on her cheek-bones that night, and her violet eyes were like tiny candles set in deep shadows. She was the spokesman of her party, the radical wing of the Social Revolutionists, and occasionally she walked to the platform and delivered a brief

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but intense appeal on behalf of her group.

The political situation was critical. Kerensky was already balancing on a tight-rope. The cry of "All Power to the Soviets," was growing louder and more insistent. Marie Spiridonova, though she was not a Bolshevik, inclined toward the Bolshevik program. She knew that the land-hunger of the peasants could not long go unsatisfied, and that no government that did not recognize this immediate demand could possibly survive. To those of us who believed that the wisest policy for Russia was to stand by Alexander Kerensky, the intense little bundle of enthusiasms that was Marie Spiridonova seemed a real fire-brand.

In the tea-room where, in intermissions, we worshiped at the shrine of the bubbling samovar, or lined up at the counters for black bread and butter sandwiches, I had the first of many talks with her. She seemed pathetically frail and exhausted, and told me that she was sleeping only about two hours a night. All day long, in and out of convention, the peasants came flocking to see her, and would talk to no one else. When she was n't in convention, or party caucus,

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or meeting delegations from the front and the villages, she was editing a newspaper for distribution among the peasants.

When the November Revolution overthrew the coalition government and placed the Bolsheviki in power, it was the voice of Marie Spiridonova more than any other that brought about the combination of the left Social Revolutionists and the Bolsheviki.

She argued that to stay aloof from the government of the People's Commissaries was to put oneself, in effect, on the side of the counter-revolutionists. She was offered a place in the Cabinet, but refused, believing she could do better work simply as a leader of the peasants. Many times in the year I have seen her and Chernoff contest for the control of the bearded men in the faded brown coats, and in the end little Marie Spiridonova always came away with the honors.

The first woman to accept a place in the Cabinet was Countess Panina, who became Assistant Minister of Public Welfare in one of the early Kerensky governments, and was later transferred to the Department of Education. Countess Panina was perhaps the best representative of a

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small group of big-spirited, high-thinking women of the aristocracy who were in protest against the oppression of the Tsar. She was a rebel in the days of autocracy, but the ever-increasing radicalism of the revolutionists made her seem more and more the conservative as the months went on. She did a big job as well as the facilities permitted, until her arrest following the downfall of Kerensky.

Her successor was Alexandria Kolontai, the Bolshevik. I had imagined Kolontai as a large woman with short black hair and a defiant manner—a picture conjured unconsciously from all the wild stories about her that were afloat. Instead, she was a mild-looking little person, with large soft blue eyes, and wavy brown hair tinged with gray, caught in a simple knot behind her head. She had been arrested following the July riots, when an effort was made to prove Lenin and Trotzky pro-German; but she was released because of lack of evidence to hold her.

I met her first at Smolney Institute, immediately after the Soviet had taken over the government. The Bolsheviks were trying to form the

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first Council of the People's Commissaries. Kolontai had been mentioned as Commissary of Welfare. A friend introduced me to her, and we had tea together. She proved to be a simple, cultured, gracious person, and the author of an extensive and authoritative volume on the subject of maternity compensation.

"Are you going to be a minister?" I asked her.

"No, indeed," she answered, with a laugh. "If I were to be a minister, I should become as stupid as all ministers."

Notwithstanding her denial, she was installed a few days later in the Ministry of Welfare. Several months afterwards I went to see her, to ask about facilities for the distribution of the condensed milk that the Red Cross had just received from America. I wickedly reminded her of that other day.

"And I am getting stupid," she said. "But what are we to do? There are so few of us to do the work."

Kolontai was a product of the upper class. She was married to a Russian engineer, and, according to the story she told me, had never even

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thought of social conditions until 1889, when she went with her husband to spend a week in a factory town.

“I was given permission to spend my days in the factory, and it made such a profound impression on me that it changed my whole life. I went away feeling I could not live unless I did something to help change the condition of the Russian workers. I knew no Socialists, but I began to read, and found my way to Socialism through books. Later I went to Zurich and took a course in economics, became a revolutionist, and spent nine years in exile.”

Kolontai shares the general Bolshevik feeling of the hopelessness of their cause, but she said:

“Even if we are conquered, we have done great things. We are breaking the way, abolishing old ideas. The creative work of lifting the culture of the world will come first to other countries.”

She changed the name of the Ministry from Social Welfare to Social Security, to make it more in keeping with the Soviet idea of benefits as a right rather than a gift. The revenue for the department was raised largely by a monopoly

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on playing cards. They were sold at thirty rubles a dozen. Kolontai, on the theory that cards were not a necessity of life and therefore should be heavily taxed, raised the price to three hundred and sixty roubles a dozen. The purchasers complained, but ordered as many as three hundred to five hundred decks.

When Kolontai took charge, the officials went on a strike and took the key from the treasury. For two weeks the whereabouts of the key remained a mystery. Then Kolontai sent for a band of Red Guard and sailors, and her order, backed by their bayonets, was obeyed.

She reorganized the department from below, but installed democratic management, giving every employee a vote. There were four thousand minor employees drawing very miserable salaries, while a few figureheads received as much as twenty-five thousand rubles a year. She readjusted the scale so that six hundred rubles a month became the highest salary paid any one.

There are two and a half million maimed soldiers in Russia, and in January there were four million others who were sick or wounded. These,

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and nearly a half a million dependent children, came under the care of the department.

Russia's infant mortality rate is the highest of any so-called civilized country. Kolontai, in an effort to correct this, opened a Palace of Motherhood, with a maternity exhibition and training classes to prepare a mother for the coming of her child. She planned this as a model for similar houses to be established all over Russia. It was arranged that mothers could come there for eight weeks prior to the birth of the child, and remain for eight weeks afterward, while substitute mothers went into the homes to take care of the other children.

Several measures were passed by the Council of People's Commissaries to protect maternity, and these were under the jurisdiction of Kolontai's department. The work-day for nursing mothers was reduced to four hours, and a compulsory rest period before and after the birth of the child was established.

"Little republics" were established in all the homes for older children and for the aged, and self-government was introduced. The social

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program included an adequate scale of compensation for the disabled victims of the war, many of whom were forced to beg on the streets. This entailed a tremendous expenditure, and I asked Madame Kolontai how it would be possible to raise so much money.

"We found money for war," she answered. "We shall find money for this."

She asserted that graft in the department reached into millions of rubles, and that the elimination of this alone would go far toward realizing some of her schemes. She proposed also requisitioning the monasteries and convents, which were the repositories of untold wealth in lands and jewels, and turning them into children's homes and asylums.

Madame Bitsenko, the fifth member of the group, was the only woman on the peace delegation to Brest-Litovsk. The peace delegation had been gone from Petrograd several days before I even learned there was a woman among the envoys. Daddy R. spoke of her quite casually one morning.

"What, a woman on the peace board!" I said

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in amazement. "Why didn't you tell me?"

"I don't know," he answered. "I didn't think anything of it."

It was rather typical of the Russian attitude. It didn't occur to any one to be surprised to find a woman in a position of power. There was no more sex-consciousness on the part of the men than on the part of the women.

A few other women were flashed upon the revolutionary screen, in one capacity or another. Vera Figner did a notable piece of work for the home-coming exiles. Madame Sheskina Javien's name was associated with the suffrage fight, and there were several women doctors who played an unspectacular but very necessary rôle.

Russian women are handicapped, like Russian men, by lack of experience. Up to the time of the Revolution, women were allowed to study law, but not to practise it. Many women studied law for the sheer joy of putting their brains to work on solid food; but when they had digested the theory, there was no practice upon which to test it. Well rounded human beings are developed in combined thought and action. The intelligent Russian woman has a larger fund of

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general cultural knowledge than the average educated American, but she has been denied the opportunity for applying her knowledge as she acquires it.

Russian women talk brilliantly upon many subjects, but most of them jump quickly about from one subject to another, and frequently, after an hour of conversation with one, I found myself groping frantically about, trying to reduce what had been said to a few simple facts capable of application.

CHAPTER XX

REVOLUTION TAKES A HOLIDAY

EX-TSAR NICHOLAS and two able-bodied assistants could have conducted a successful counter-revolution on December 25, 1917. But the Tsar, whatever else may be said of him, was a Russian, so he was otherwise engaged.

On a holiday no Russian, high or low, orthodox, old believer or unbeliever, Jew or Gentile, has time for anything but play. The Russian calendar, lagging nearly two weeks behind the schedule of western Europe, provided the foreigners with a double portion of festivity. In the midst of war and revolution, we not only celebrated Christmas, but we celebrated it twice.

To my sunshine-fed California soul, that Christmas stepped ready-made from a fairy tale. The lazy lie-abed sun does n't get up until nearly noon, and before the afternoon is half gone it has brushed the snow with streaks of coral and

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rose, and departed, leaving a glowing memory painted upon the horizon.

Petrograd, before she puts on her white cloak of winter, is just a bit shabby. The red and yellow stucco palaces could do with a new coat of paint. Here and there the plaster is badly in need of patching, and the ornate scroll-saw ruffles around the buildings are pathetically like cheap lace. When the beauty of winter comes toppling out of the heavens, she stretches her arms and catches it all. The snow piles in billows on roofs and chimneys, and the icicles hang like crystal fringes from the woodwork. Against the background of the white snow, the faded yellows and the bricky reds become warm and glowing. The little trees in the palace courtyards, stripped of leaves and clothed in swan's feathers, are like ghosts or shadows of trees, so vague and frail they are.

Christmas against such a background must have elements of beauty, however empty the shops or troubled the people. Vera and Ivan take their play-time seriously. Because they wept yesterday and die to-morrow, they play the more lustily to-day. Though revolution raged,

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machine-guns rattled, and cabinets fell, the ballet pursued its uninterrupted course to the end of the season. At the Marinsky Theater, Karsavina and Smirnóva fought to hold the honors of the dance against all new comers, and Shalyapin sang the parts that made him famous in the days of Nicholas with all his accustomed gusto. When the proper time arrived, the winter slides for the children were put in their usual places in the parks, and until the snows came the "American mountain" (roller-coaster) in the Russian Coney Island had done a record-smashing business.

Of course they would celebrate Christmas—revolution or no revolution! It never occurred to any one that it might be otherwise.

As the date of our holiday drew near, my Russian friends plied me with questions. To the chef of the Hotel Europe, an American mince pie was a riddle without an answer. The Red Cross Mission gave a luncheon for the American correspondents Christmas Day, and Major Allen Wardwell and I were commissioned to go shopping. Colonel Robins suggested turkey, mince pie, and a Christmas tree as desirable trim-

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nings, and we had great fun and many adventures achieving them.

The luncheon table was set in a large, high-ceilinged room with red velvet hangings. A crackling fire blazed on the hearth, and in the center of the table a gleaming tree stepped from a mossy bed of crimson tulips. We pulled down the blinds and shut out war and revolution, while we laughed merrily over the Russian conception of mince pie, and wondered secretly, each in his own terms, what they were doing off there across the world at home.

Major Thatcher and Major Webster had the bad judgment to choose that day upon which to go to bed with colds, so we had a second celebration in their rooms. On the way back to the hotel, I stopped at the old police station to leave a book and a "Merry Christmas" for Jacob Peters.

"It 's a Christmas box," he said, a wistful smile lighting his tired face. He was weary and disillusioned and hungry for an open fireplace, his little girl, and his British "missis." "There is nothing in the world like an English Christmas," he said.

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We talked for a few minutes, then I hurried back to the hotel to dress. In the National City Bank Building, that night, the whole American colony came out to celebrate Christmas. That party was a triumph, taxing all the ingenuity of a clever woman and half a dozen resourceful men. It was a supper dance, and the miracle of providing food for two hundred people with Petrograd's cupboard stripped almost bare was a real achievement. The presiding genius was Mrs. Mildred Farwell, an American who quietly did any number of nice things not only for the Americans, but for many poor stranded Russians whose lives had unfitted them to meet the topsy-turvy order.

All Russia contributed to load the buffet with eatables of the "kind that mother used to make," and many a Russian cook was a wiser person before the party was over. They brought baking powder from Vladivostok, six thousand versts away, to make American layer cakes. The eggs came from Pskoff, up near the Russian front. The Ambassador's pantry was robbed of its white flour. And the turkeys came from heaven knows where.

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In the days before the war the National City Bank Building was the Turkish Embassy, and for a night it took on all its former glory. The huge mirrors reflected a whirling company of women in shimmering frocks and men whose evening clothes had not been out of their creases for many a day. There was a balalika band, and between one-steps and waltzes couples chattered in palm-secluded corners. Not a speech was made that night. Mrs. Farwell was determined that we should play, and play we did.

December 25 on the Russian calendar fell on Monday. Sunday morning I crossed the Neva with a friend, and drove to the quiet woods out on the islands. It was a favorite haunt of mine; for here winter, whose mysteries I was discovering for the first time, was at its best. The bough-bent pines and spruces groaned beneath the white weight upon their outstretched arms, and the deserted forests were big, silent, and untroubled.

To-day the woods came marching toward me. Along the sidewalk a procession of shabby men and worn-looking women hurried homeward, and over the shoulder of each was a tiny tree. In the forest we found the scars—lovely pines

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clipped off at the top, baby spruces cut off at the roots, familiar families broken up.

"It's a shame," said my companion warmly.
"It's vandalism, nothing else."

At first I too could see only the scars there in the great whiteness. Then it was night, and through the windows of Petrograd I saw the trees. They were candle-lighted, and the shining eyes of little children looked upon them with delight.

"It's the price," I said. "A different destiny, but who knows—perhaps a happier one. Perhaps it is better to make the gift of a glorious hour, to find immortality in the memory of a child, than to live on to a green old age."

"Perhaps," he said.

That afternoon, along the Sadovaya, where peasant women and crippled soldiers sold herrings and candles, apples and sausages, crude toys and painted cradles, sugarless candy and ugly dolls, I found the mothers of Petrograd pathetically trying to contribute to that hour. They paid thirty rubles a dozen for tiny apples, and twelve rubles a pound for candy. It was a

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lean Christmas, but it was Christmas nevertheless. The world stopped for three days; war, revolution, hunger, mattered not. All of them must make way for Christmas. The restaurants and the hotel dining-rooms were closed, and, unless we had taken the precaution to lay in a supply of sardines beforehand, or had friends with a farther vision than our own, we might have gone hungry.

At midnight Christmas Eve I crossed the square to St. Isaac's for the Christmas service. The church was deserted. I stood alone in the dark under the towering columns, waiting; but nobody came. Back in the hotel, I discovered that the service was to be at four in the morning. At four, with some friends, I returned. This time the church was lighted, and the priests were there in their gold robes. There was a table where communion bread and candles were for sale. We bought the bread and the candles, and listened while the rich, deep voices of the priests sang the holiday mass. In other days that church had been packed. This morning it was practically empty. A few servant girls, a few

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soldiers, here and there a tired mother with four or five children—that was all. They were celebrating, but not in the cathedrals.

We went back to the hotel to make tea and to fight the battles of the world—religion, economics, wars, and all the rest of it—until seven o'clock. At the Europe that night we relit the tree, and sat around the fire, talking of home.

During the holiday week all of Petrograd went to the ballet, or the opera, or some other place of amusement within its means. There were morning matinées and afternoon matinées and festival performances of all sorts.

One afternoon we had a box at the Marinsky Theater. The ballet was "The Hunchback Horse." The old Russian fairy tale, in its wonderful Bakst setting, was done as it is done in Petrograd and nowhere else. Another night it was a festival performance of Glinka's opera, "Russlan and Ludmilla," celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of its initial production. Shalyapin sang, and there was a gorgeous ballet with costumes that must have come from the treasure-chests of ancient nobles.

Another afternoon I was going with Edgar

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Sisson, Arthur Bullard, and some other Americans to hear "Boris Gudonof." I arrived at the theater, and found myself sole occupant of the box. I sat there, wondering what had happened to every one else and turning possible revolutions over in my mind, when a messenger arrived with word that a message from President Wilson was coming over the wires.

It was the thing for which we in Petrograd had hoped above everything else in the world. Russia in that hour seemed utterly alone. She had been pleading with the other powers to state their war aims and to come to a peace conference, but they had remained silent. At last America was speaking. The message came in fragments, a bit here and a bit there. It was two days before we had the full text; but we knew from the first paragraph that President Wilson was sounding Russia's right to the friendship and the protection of our country.

There is, moreover, a voice calling for these definitions of principle and of purpose which is, it seems to me, more thrilling and more compelling than any of the many moving voices with which the troubled air of the world is filled. It is the voice of the Russian people. They are prostrate and all but helpless, it would

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seem, before the grim power of Germany, which has hitherto known no relenting and no pity. Their power, apparently, is shattered, and yet their soul is not subservient. They will not yield either in principle or in action. The conception of what is right, of what is humane and honorable for them to accept, has been stated with a frankness, a largeness of view, a generosity of spirit, and a universal human sympathy which must challenge the admiration of every friend of mankind; and they have refused to compound their ideas or desert others that they themselves may be safe. They call to us to say what it is that we desire, in what, if in anything, our purpose and our spirit differs from theirs; and I believe that the people of the United States would wish me to respond with utter simplicity and frankness. Whether their present leaders believe it or not, it is our heartfelt desire and hope that some way may be opened whereby we may be privileged to assist the people of Russia to attain their utmost hope of liberty and ordered peace.

All that week Russia celebrated busily and gaily. On New Year's Eve I found myself at the peasants' headquarters on the Fontanka Canal. There were about a hundred of us crowded together in a small room to watch the New Year come to Petrograd. Marie Spiridonova was our hostess.

We sat on benches at long tables, and ate soup, roast pig, meat cutlets, and Russian pasties made

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of light bread and filled with chopped cabbage and chopped meat.

The room was lit with candles planted in the necks of bottles or poised upon the pointed spears of desk-files. In one corner was a Christmas tree, a sad little tree with crude red crape paper ornaments and anemic-looking candles. Outside the door, lighting the hall, where from time to time we adjourned to dance the Russian waltz or the mazurka, was a single kerosene lamp.

Beside me sat a pale-faced girl with short hair, deep circles beneath her eyes, and that look of utter exhaustion which characterized all the revolutionists in those disappointing days full of the weary work of trying to make reality match dreams.

At the end of the table was a typical great Russian peasant, his gray belted blouse buttoned beneath a shaggy growth of blond beard, his round blue eyes wide with questions. The toast-master was a Russian Jew with the face of a poet or a musician. The year before he would not have been allowed to live in certain parts of Petrograd unless he paid a bribe to some official for overlooking the fact of his race. This hour was his.

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Whatever the new year might hold, he had been a free man among men. A year since he had been an exile in a strange land, and "free Russia" a shadowy dream. A year hence— No one could say; no one could think that far. They took the moment, conscious of all its possibilities, and gloried in it.

It was a strange evening's entertainment—an odd but typical Russian mixture of comedy and tragedy. They made speeches, and parodied the eloquence of the day by talking a strange and meaningless jumble of words, switching with lightning rapidity from one topic to another, while the crowd rocked with laughter at the strange effects they produced. Just at the merriest moment, when the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs had been tried and found guilty of a number of amusing offenses against the Revolution, and the company had voted to deprive him of his *sladky* (dessert), some one proposed that they sing the hymn of eternal memory to the comrades who had fallen in the Revolution. Silently they stood, and, while the church bells outside chimed a requiem to the great red year of

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tragedy and glory, they sang the solemn tribute to their dead.

Marie Spiridonova went from table to table, trying to make the strange ones feel at home. She was sitting beside me, quietly talking, when a sudden murmur ran through the crowd and a flare of light touched the ceiling. We looked up to find the doorway filled with flames. The lamp had caught fire. The little revolutionist made a bound toward it, and threw a coat over the burning mass. The spirit of panic had run like flames through the room, and at least half of the occupants were on their feet, rushing for the door. Spiridonova lifted her tiny hands and waved them as I have seen her do so many times in the peasants' conventions.

"Tavarischi! Tavarischi! Tiche! Tiche!" she cried, and they settled quietly back in their places.

On New Year's night the first volunteer army of the Revolution left Petrograd for the front. They gathered in the Mikhailovsky Menage, which has seen many strange meetings in the revolutionary year. In the old days the aristocracy came here to watch "officers and gentlemen" take

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part in riding competitions. Since the war it has been used as a garage for armored motor-cars, and many a sharp contest between revolutionary leaders took place here. The meeting was called for two o'clock, and Nicolai Lenin was to review the forces. As usual, it was seven before the ceremonies started. Two armored cars, decorated with evergreens and red banners, stood watch at the entrance. Inside a third armored car had been trimmed for use as a tribunal. On either side of the huge building were rows of formidable mud-colored motors.

The place was swarming with men. They were a tatterdemalion lot, who made up in spirit what they lacked in equipment. There were a few soldiers among them, but most of them were factory workers. They had no uniforms, no blankets; some of them wore short jackets and some of them long coats. They were going they knew not where, but going to fight the foes of revolution. Their tin pails and meager packs were strapped to their backs or tied on with rope or string, and each man's most precious possession was his rifle. They were bound for the trenches, to fill up the gaps left by deserting sol-

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C. Orrin S. Wightman

"It was a dangerous partnership, for when the state fell the church tottered also"



New Russia votes for the Constituent Assembly

Young Russia makes revolutionary demonstration at school

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diers. Most of them were undersized; some were mere boys; but all were fired with faith in their cause.

Dark settled early upon the big garage. By four o'clock it was quite black. For a while we stood there, unable to distinguish one face from another, listening to them sing. Then candles were brought. One man came with a balalika, another with a tambourine, a third with an accordion. They struck up a lively village tune, and a couple of soldiers, packs and guns still on their backs, began to dance. A ring was quickly formed, and, one after another, the men from the various provinces clicked off the favorite dances of their villages. Three times the word came that Lenin had arrived, and the men lined up to salute him. Each time it was a false alarm, and they went back to their dancing.

At last he came, and a mighty cheer went up. His brown eyes were shining, and the chill winter evening had painted two bright spots upon his cheeks. He wore a black fur cap and a black overcoat, and there was a brisk, pleasant cheeriness about him that the rogues'-gallery pictures of him do not suggest.

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"He looks like a prosperous French bourgeois banker," said an Englishman standing beside me.

"No," I answered; "more like a contented Irishman behind a freshly filled pipe."

I was standing beside the tribunal, and he stopped to shake hands with me before he climbed to the improvised platform. He spoke briefly, telling the men that the fate of the Revolution was in their hands and they must guard it against all foes. He spoke well, but without the eloquence with which I had seen Trotzky sweep so many crowds.

When he had finished, the chairman asked Albert Williams to speak. He had been studying Russian strenuously, and decided to try to talk to the men in their own language. They were as delighted as children over his effort, and when he began groping frantically for a word, Lenin laughingly supplied it. When he finished they cheered him until the building rocked. He had stolen the honors from the Commissary of Commissaries, and none was more pleased than Lenin himself.

He talked with us for a few minutes, then drove away in a closed limousine with two or three

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other men. He had hardly got out of sight when a bullet came crashing through the windows of his car and whizzed over his head. A man sitting beside him was slightly injured, but Lenin was unhurt. It was the first of many attempts upon his life. No one ever knew who had fired the shot. The next holiday date on the Russian calendar was January 8. That was the day of the "Blessing of the Waters." Except for the great Easter, there was formerly no holier day in all of Holy Russia. All over the Empire the people, from the Tsar in the Winter Palace to the simplest peasant in the most remote village, always turned out in festival processions. The priests, in splendid robes, with painted ikons and silken banners held aloft, marched to the banks of the frozen rivers, followed by the singing multitudes. This year the great day passed unnoticed.

At the appointed hour for the ceremony I left the War Hotel and crossed the square to the huge St. Isaac's Cathedral. I looked through the door into a vast empty cavern. I made my way toward the Neva. There was no procession in sight. Not a living thing was abroad on the

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banks of the river. Instead of the usual mighty gathering, a handful of people, perhaps a dozen at most, had started out, grown discouraged, and turned back. For the first time in the memory of the oldest peasant in Russia, the waters went unblessed.

It was a significant fact. When the Tsar crashed down from his throne in March, he carried more with him than the rest of the world dreamed at that moment. His picture shared a place on the wall beside the sacred ikon. He represented on earth that which God represented in heaven. It was a dangerous partnership; for when the state fell, the Church tottered also.

The Russian Church of the past was on the side of the established order. It was as much a tool of absolutism as the secret police. The priests were used to help intrench the Tsar, enforce the will of the bureaucracy, and carry out the orders of the gendarme. The deep religious craving of the Russian nature was perverted to keep the people in subjection. The Church was not of the people, nor for the people. When the great crisis came, they repudiated it. Despite all attempts at democratization, the people drifted fur-

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ther and further away. The lamps before the sacred shrines on the street-corners went out, and the number of the passers-by who stopped to cross themselves grew smaller and smaller. The great power of the Russian Church, around which so much of the life of the past clustered, was gone. No one could predict what the future would hold. On that day there was some discussion about it. Some said that reaction would come and a disillusioned people would return to their old gods.

"Some day," I heard one Russian say, "the peasant will awake in the midst of his misfortunes, and recall that on January 8, 1918, the waters were not blessed. To this he will attribute all his troubles."

The Russian peasant, mystic, simple, childlike person that he is, accepts or rejects the whole. In his past the Church pervaded every aspect of his life. It was one of the few streaks of color that pierced the drabness of existence. When his disillusionment came, it was complete.

Some said that the Russian would attempt to construct an ethical religion upon the ruins of the picturesque orthodox church; some that he will substitute a new faith for his saints of other days.

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Some hope that the freed priests, whose very existence depended upon their submission to the evils of the old order, may become new leaders and helpers.

No one can tell. In the meantime, the candlesticks before the ikons are empty.

CHAPTER XXI

ON THE ROCKS OF UNCOMPROMISE

THE Constituent Assembly met under the Bolshevik guns of Smolney Institute. Although it was the hope and fear of the Russian Republic, it came and went in the space of twelve hours. It was born in bloodshed, and died in bloodshed, and with it died the last hope of the moderate Socialist and the bourgeoisie.

Its brief moment of existence began at four o'clock on the afternoon of January 18, and it was dispersed at four o'clock the next morning by the "Do svidanya!" of a Russian sailor, who sleepily informed the members it was time to go home.

Eleven months had passed since the first joyous shout of free Russia had filled the Petrograd streets with "Long live the Constituent Assembly!"

First one faction had carried this banner aloft, and discarded it; and then another. The group

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in power always feared it. During the days of the various coalition cabinets, the radicals clamored for immediate convocation. The last phrase that Trotzky uttered, when he and his followers bolted from the Council of the Republic at the first stormy sitting of that body, was, "Long live the Constituent Assembly!"

When the Bolshevik Revolution gave all power to the Soviet, the opposition Socialists, the Cadets (Constitutional Democrats), and even such monarchists as still ventured an opinion, rallied around the standard of the Constituent Assembly, and marked its date for the fall of the People's Commissaries. Many people who had opposed and delayed its meeting suddenly became its staunchest supporters. It was to be the final test of strength.

The Bolsheviks had announced that it could not meet until four hundred members had convened, and placed armed guards at the palace entrances to see their decree was carried out.

The Assembly was scheduled to meet Tuesday, December 11, and the day was declared a national holiday. The shops and banks closed, and thousands of municipal employees, students,

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cadets, government and bank employees, and a few workmen and peasants, marched with banners to the palace, singing revolutionary songs as they went.

At three o'clock in the afternoon, the thirty-five delegates already arrived gathered around a great mahogany table in the library, and resolved to declare the Constituent Assembly open. Mayor Shreider, of the dissolved city Duma, the oldest member present, was chosen to speak the words.

Saroken, one of the delegates, reported that Shingareff, Kokoshkin, and Prince Dolgorukoff had been arrested, and proposed a thoroughly Russian method of meeting the situation.

"We must refrain from protesting against their arrest, and refrain from demanding their freedom," he said. "We have simply to recognize that they are free. Only the weak can protest, and only those who have no power need to demand. We are powerful. We have not to demand nor protest. Members of the Constituent Assembly *can not* be arrested. Therefore they are free."

Roditcheff, who had been a member of three

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Dumas under the Tsar, remained unconvinced by this logic, and demanded a protest. It was written.

Chernoff accused the Bolsheviki of being like the Mahommedans, who wanted to burn all the books but the Koran, on the ground that all things necessary to be said were said in the Koran, and all other books must either say something different, in which case they should be burned, or must say the same thing, which would be a waste of words.

"The Constituent Assembly, if it is against the Bolshevik, it would not represent the people, if it is for the Bolsheviki, it will merely repeat what they have already done," he said.

Trotsky and Lenin had no hesitancy in declaring that, unless the Constituent Assembly was Bolshevik, it would not represent the people, and therefore must be dissolved.

They said, quite truthfully, that the Assembly was chosen according to election laws made by the coalition government, and conducted by officials representative of that group, and of the political rather than of the economic ideal.

The Revolution that overthrew Tsarism was

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basically a political revolution. That which established the dictatorship of the proletariat was fundamentally economic. Between the political and the economic revolutions, the demands of the masses had undergone a sweeping change. The Constituent Assembly, in spite of its socialistic membership, and its claim of being the only elective group in Russia, was a bequest of the political Revolution.

More than a month elapsed between the time of that abortive meeting of thirty-five members, and the date of the actual opening of the national gathering.

Petrograd awaited the hour with faint hope and much misgiving.

On January 16, the "Extraordinary Commission for the Protection of Petrograd" declared the city in a state of siege, and issued the following proclamation:

TO THE POPULATION OF PETROGRAD!

The Extraordinary Commission for the Protection of Petrograd is in possession of information that counter-revolutionists of all shades, united in the struggle against the Soviet authorities, have scheduled their demonstration for January 18—the day of the opening of the Constituent Assembly.

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It has also become known that the leaders of these counter-revolutionary plots are Filonenko, Savinkoff, and Kerensky, who arrived in Petrograd, coming from the Don from Kaledin.

The organization of the counter-revolutionists is being supported through considerable funds by the Moscow and Petrograd bankers and speculators.

The Extraordinary Commission has taken appropriate measures for the maintenance of strict revolutionary order in the capital.

Making this public to all citizens of Petrograd, the Extraordinary Commission calls their attention to the following:

(1) Petrograd is in a state of siege, and all attempts of pogroms will be suppressed by armed force.

(2) Any insubordination to the orders of the representatives of people's authorities will entail stringent measures of reprisal.

(3) Any attempt of groups of counter-revolutionists to penetrate into the district of the Tauridian Palace or the Smolney, beginning with January 18, will be energetically stopped by armed force.

(4) Comrades and Citizens, loyal to the authority of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Soviets, are called upon to retain complete calm, to support the maintenance of strictest order everywhere, and not to participate in demonstrations, meetings, and street crowdings, in order not to suffer accidentally should it prove necessary to apply armed force against the counter-revolutionists.

EXTRAORDINARY COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION
OF PETROGRAD.

January 16, 1918, 11 P. M.

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Despite this proclamation, plans for a demonstration went on, and we were all prepared for trouble.

A box in the Tauride Palace had been placed at the disposal of Colonel Raymond Robins, and he asked me to join his party.

It was ten o'clock on the morning of the 18th when we left the War Hotel. With us were Edgar T. Sisson of the United States Department of Public Information, and the Russian, Alex Gomberg. We drove first to the Foreign Office, where Trotzky's secretary, who was to be the fifth of the group, awaited us.

On the snow-covered stones a crowd of officers with red banners formed in marching order. Across the Winter Palace Square came a Cossack of the "Wild" Division, in flying cape of shaggy fur. He was astride a tiny black pony, and rode with the perfect ease of men of the Urals. A Red Guard, who sat an uneasy and unaccustomed seat upon a fractious horse, tried vainly to overtake him. They were a striking pair of black silhouettes against the snow-clad world that morning.

We drove back to the Nevsky. At the Mik-

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hailovskaya we met another group of demonstrators, preparing to march to the Grave of the Brotherhood on Marsovo Pola, where the victims of the first Revolution were buried. Most of them were striking bank employees, and, as they stood there waiting to go forward, they argued with the soldiers who lined the sidewalks, urging them to march for the Constituent Assembly.

The street-cars were stopped on account of the snow. Forty or fifty conductors, men and women, in gold-braided uniforms of blue broadcloth, were clearing the tracks with wooden shovels. Deliberately or unconsciously, they formed an effective block to the paraders. An officer asked them to move. Their answer was short and final:

“We won’t get out of the way for the bourgeoisie!”

We turned in the direction of the Marsovo Pola. As we came within sight of it, we heard a volley of machine-gun fire in the direction of the Liteiny. The white field was deserted. Garlands of green were looped around the huge mound, and the red wreaths were like splotches of blood against the white snow. A parade mar-

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shal, with a red band around his arm, stood at one corner, the center of a small and excited group.

"Where are the people?" Colonel Robins asked him.

"They won't let them come," he said. "They are shooting them down in the streets."

We drove along the Liteiny in the direction of the firing. At the Kirotnia, we came suddenly upon a group of Red Guards and sailors, brandishing ominous guns. They rushed about, tossing orders at one another, their faces flushed with excitement.

"Murderers! Murderers!" shouted a woman, shaking her fist in their direction.

"Murderers! Murderers!" echoed a dozen other women, who turned blazing eyes upon them.

Scattered all over the snow were broken and splintered wooden poles—all that remained of the proud banners that a few minutes before had proclaimed "All Power to the Constituent Assembly" and "Long Live the Boss of Russian Land!"

We did not need to ask what had happened. The broken poles told the story.

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Down the Liteiny and into the Furstadtskaya our little Siberian pony pulled the sleigh across the bloodstained snow. Men and women huddled in doorways. Their coats were dusted with white, and as they brushed one another off they talked in frightened voices. Some of them were ghastly pale, in spite of the biting chill of the winter morning. The wounded had been carried upstairs to a Red Cross hospital, and the dead—fifteen was the day's toll, according to official reports next morning—had also been removed.

The paraders had penetrated within the forbidden zone. They had refused to heed the orders of the guard to stop. A hand-to-hand fight followed. Some one fired a shot. There was another and another, and in a moment the havoc was complete. Fifteen human beings had died to save the Revolution. Perhaps fifteen others had killed to save the Revolution. Both groups were fighting for the same thing, but the word spelled a different set of meanings to each.

It was noon when we pulled up before the Tauride Palace. More than a century ago the great yellow building was flung there by the wave of Catherine's hand or the scratch of her quill

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pen, and dedicated to the needs of the favorite of the hour. It lay across three or four city blocks, shining in a new coat of yellow calcium. White snow covered roofs and cornices like deep frosting, and spilled over the edge in a fringe of lacy icicles.

Behind the upper windows, hidden from public gaze, were six machine-guns, with tapes loaded for use. Within a moment's call, the gunners waited for action. Behind the ornate iron fences, Red Guards and sailors paced ceaselessly back and forth.

We made our way through a procession of sentries into the Palace, up the broad staircases, across a wide lobby, and into a huge ball-room. Great circles of light were reflected on the polished floor from the mammoth candelabra hung on the frescoed ceiling somewhere up near the sky. There were guards and more guards, stairs and more stairs, until at last a sailor politely forced us into a box overlooking the Assembly.

The auditorium was a great square room surrounded by balconies and roofed with glass. The seats were arranged like a fan in widening circles. They were cushioned with red leather, and strips

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of red carpet ran like ribs toward the tribunal, where slender bay trees stretched their green arms against the white columns. Here red-leather-cushioned couches marked the places where the many mighty men of Russia's past had sat. Here, in due time, came the People's Commissaries.

Trotsky was away at Brest-Litovsk. Kolontai, Commissary of Public Welfare, was the first to take her place. She came in with a large brief-case under her arm, and paused for a moment to search the crowd for comrade faces. Krylenko, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, was just behind her, hurrying in with that quick, nervous stride so familiar to all of us who frequented the corridors at Smolney. Krylenko was always going somewhere in a great rush, and we never saw much of him except a grotesque and fleeting picture of his long, narrow back, and the little short legs that carried it.

Lunarcharsky, the Commissary of Education, came next. Volodarsky—whom one Russian called “The little bell that always echoes Trotsky”—and half a dozen lesser lights slipped quietly into their seats. Last of all came Lenin,

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his merry brown eyes bright and his face serene.

The hours went on. We punctuated them with many glasses of tea. Nothing happened. Three o'clock came. I wandered out on the balcony, and looked down upon the ball-room, where men and women paced back and forth across the inlaid floor. They seemed like pygmy people beside the massive columns. The bigness of the North and the splendor of departed ages was in that room. The largeness of a great materialistic dream was there, and the work of countless little men tossed into the building at the command of a single woman. The little men and the big woman had long since crumbled to dust. To-day other little men—the inheritors of the builders, the masons and carpenters, peasants and factory workers—were here. They were the one tremendous fact of the moment.

Back in the assembly room, more and more seats were filled. Chernoff was there. I had last seen him sitting dejectedly in a corner at the Peasants' Convention, shaking his head, while his tiny arch-enemy, Marie Spiridonova, swayed the meeting to her will. In a few minutes these two were again to be pitted against each other. Tse-

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retelli, whose dark, sad face and tragic eyes had not been seen in public places since the dissolution of the Council of the Republic, had also come.

At four o'clock a bell rang, and a member of the "Right S. R."—the conservative wing of the Socialist Revolutionists—asked that the oldest man in the convention be chosen to open the Assembly. The right side of the house arose and vigorously applauded the suggestion.

The members of the left sat stolidly in their seats and hammered their desks, shouting, "Sverdloff! Sverdloff!" For fully five minutes they pounded without ceasing, their closed fists making a din that drowned every other sound. The white-haired, white-whiskered old man who had taken his place on the rostrum looked from left to right in a bewildered way, and finally yielded the gavel to Sverdloff.

The Bolsheviks had won the first round in the fight. The Assembly was to be officially opened by the government.

Sverdloff was the chairman of the Executive Committee of the All-Russian Soviet. He was a small, pale, dark little chap, quick moving and fiery spirited. He began by saying that, as in

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their time the French bourgeois revolutionists made a declaration of the rights of man, so the Socialist members of this new time must make their own declaration, fitting the hour and the new demand. He followed with a statement of the Bolshevik program of land to the peasants, control of industry by the workers, government by the Soviets, recognition of the People's Commissaries by the Constituent Assembly, and immediate general democratic peace.

The Bolsheviki punctuated his speech with vigorous applause. The right Socialists expressed themselves equally emphatically by stolid silence.

When he finished, a delegate proposed that the Assembly sing the "International." It was a challenge no Socialist could refuse. They arose to a man. This was the first and last time, in that stormy twelve hours' session, that they were united upon any single point.

The Cadet members had all remained away. Every man in the room was a Socialist. But worlds of unbridgable distance kept them apart. Combination and compromise were utterly impossible. The Bolsheviki had all the powers of

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possession, reinforced by the unanimous backing of the Russian bayonets. The conservatives had a feeble and helpless majority.

The right S. R.'s proposed Chernoff as chairman of the Assembly. Squertsoff, an old Moscow schoolmaster, nominated Marie Spiridonova in a brief challenge of uncompromise.

"Everything is ended between us," he said. "You are with the Cadets and the bourgeoisie. We are with the workers!"

In their choice of leaders, both parties were flinging wide to catch the Russian peasant. They were reaching into the thatched huts of White Russia and the log cabins of Siberia, and they were using the two human beings who could be counted upon to make the greatest appeal to the men who gather round the Russian stoves at night, and talk politics in simple peasant fashion.

Some one suggested, as a compromise, that there be two chairmen. It was voted down. Krylenko proposed that Kerensky be elected. Some one else indignantly declared it was no time to joke.

The vote was counted. From the box I watched the tellers dropping the tiny marbles

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from one bowl into another. My note-book was open upon my lap. Every time a marble dropped I made a mark. When the last vote was counted, I turned to Colonel Robins:

"It's Chernoff!" I said. "He has 244 votes to Marie Spiridonova's 151."

The others had not noticed what I was doing, and they looked up, wondering whether I had suddenly become clairvoyant or merely gone mad. I showed them my pen-scratchings. From the platform, the chairman confirmed my figures.

After the election the flood-gates of speech were opened. Denunciation followed denunciation. The evening hours ran on to midnight, and with each passing hour the possibility of compromise seemed farther and farther away.

Chernoff's opening speech was greeted with cries of "Deloy! Deloy!" (Down! Down!) The empty space in the back of our box was filled up with men. A dark, swarthy-skinned factory worker, with sullen eyes, that flamed red and went black by turns, sat just behind me. Poised on the railing was a Bolshevik sailor, who interrupted frequently with shouts of "Korniloff! Kaledin! Kerensky! Counter-revolutionist!"

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In the adjoining box Trotzky's sister, Madame Kameneff, sat, surrounded by soldiers with new revolvers in shining cases strapped at their hips. In the room where the Right S. R.'s held their meetings, a machine-gun spoke a silent but none the less ominous warning.

Every one of those four hundred delegates was a human bomb, ready to explode at any second. Lenin alone seemed unperturbed. He stretched himself out on one of the red-carpeted steps of the tribunal, and, hidden from the eyes of the crowd, went calmly to sleep.

The only speaker to whom the radical members paid the slightest attention was Tseretelli. To me he was the heroic figure of the day. He pleaded a lost cause, but he made a brave last stand. His position was uncompromising on the main issue, and therefore impossible; but he talked with a sincerity and straightforwardness that commanded the respect, if not the agreement, of his opponents.

After his speech, the Bolsheviki demanded from the Constituent Assembly confirmation of the decrees already passed regarding peace, land, and control of industry. Most of all, they de-

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manded recognition of the Soviet government as the supreme power. They asked that the question of the government be settled first.

The conservative majority voted to consider war and peace first, the land question next, and finally a federative republic, thus postponing the fatal issue. With this, the Bolsheviki demanded the right of intermission for party caucus. It was granted. α

Two hours passed. Nothing happened. The members of the Right grew impatient. The Chairman reopened the meeting, and Skobelev, former Minister of Labor, demanded the appointment of a commission to investigate the bloodshed of the day.

Representatives of the Left filed back to their seats. A Bolshevik member read a statement declaring that the majority of the Constituent Assembly had refused to accept the demands of the People's Commissaries, which were the demands of the toiling masses and the economic revolution, and in so doing had become a counter-revolutionary body.

With that the Bolsheviki left the hall. The Left S. R.'s, headed by Marie Spiridonova and

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a handsome young revolutionist named Komkoff, remained to offer a resolution that the Constituent Assembly recognize the peace steps of the People's Commissaries. The delegates refused. Instead, they passed a resolution asking, in the name of the Constituent Assembly, that all countries at war come to an agreement for a general democratic peace.

A sudden commotion arose. Two men were on their feet, hurling ugly names at each other. One drew a revolver. Some one grabbed him and pressed him quickly into his seat. The difference of opinion was a personal one. For a terrible minute the crowd sat breathless. The guards in the balcony, thinking a real fight was about to begin, loaded their guns. Quiet returned in a flash, and the chairman went on with the meeting; but the incident had not helped to loosen the taut nerves. The Left S. R.'s got up quietly from their seats, and departed from the convention as the Bolsheviki had done.

For half an hour the meeting continued. A resolution proclaiming the Federated Republic of Russia was passed. The question of nationalization of land without compensation was in-

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roduced. Before the discussion had progressed far, the guard ordered the meeting closed.

"I was appointed to defend the Constituent Assembly," said the commissary of the palace. "This meeting has now become simply a party caucus, and we suggest that you retire to the headquarters of the Right S. R."

The guard yawned. President Chernoff demurred. The guns once more began to assume ominous positions.

"Why should we wait? We should arrest all! We should kill the counter-revolutionist Chernoff!" came in angry murmurs from factory workers and soldiers.

The delegates looked from one to another. Some one moved a resolution to adjourn until five that afternoon. It was promptly adopted.

The murmurs of "Counter-revolutionist!" grew louder and louder. The soldiers and sailors flocked down the stairs, and crowded around the delegates. Some of the Bolshevik members who had remained in the ball-room surrounded Chernoff, and took him in safety through the hostile throng to the gate.

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Every man who walked out in the gray morning knew that the Constituent Assembly was at an end.

It was foredoomed to just this fate. Its existence hung upon one point—the acceptance or rejection of a government of people's commissaries. For the moderate Socialists to have accepted the Bolsheviki, whose leaders they had denounced as usurpers and traitors and whose work they had been sabotaging, would from their standpoint have been impossible.

For the People's Commissaries to have permitted themselves to be rejected would have been to acknowledge themselves a body of adventurers, and all of their decrees mere scraps of worthless paper.

I have never met in any country any group of men possessed of such power as theirs who would have acted otherwise.

The Constituent Assembly contained the seeds of a great governmental experiment, but they were scattered upon the rocks of uncompromise, and there could be no harvest.

At midnight Albert Williams was talking to Madame Kolontai.

THE ROCKS OF UNCOMPROMISE

“How long do you think the Constituent Assembly will last?” he asked.

“Comrade, don’t you think it has lasted too long already?” she answered.

CHAPTER XXII

THE INTELLIGENTZIA OBJECTS

THE Constituent Assembly never met again.

At the hour when the delegates were supposed to reassemble, the Tauride Palace was dark. In the white hall at Smolney the members of the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russian Soviet were gathered to discuss its dissolution. For all practical purposes, this had been accomplished that morning when the guard told the members to go home. The Central Executive Committee was merely planning to place its rubber stamp upon the proceedings.

In the chair was Sverdloff—the very same who the day before had presided at the historic gathering. The meeting opened in a storm. Half a dozen speakers demanded an investigation of the bloodshed. Rosanoff, the head of the labor unions, and several other men protested against the dissolution of the Assembly. Then Lenin arrived. As he walked down the aisle, Kramer-

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off, the good-natured but irrepressible protestor at all meetings, arose to the full height of his six feet five and shouted:

“Long live the dictator!”

In a minute there was a mob of angry men upon their feet, angry at Krameroff and shouting violently:

“Put him out! Put him out!”

When the chairman had calmed them, Lenin took his place. He stood quietly for a moment, surveying his audience, with his hands in his pockets and an appraising expression in his brown eyes. He knew what was expected of him. He must win the wavering members of his own flock. He must reach out to the larger audience spread over the vast areas of Russia. He must speak so that he would be heard beyond the confines of his country, in that world whose attention was focused for the time on this group of strange new actors in the international drama. Lenin began quietly tracing the historical developments of the Soviet as an institution. He made a critical analysis of the workings of various parliaments, declaring that they had become merely a sparring-place for the verbal contests of socialists.

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“In Russia,” he said, “the workers have developed organizations, which give them power to execute their aspirations. You are told that we ask you to jump a hundred years. We do not ask you to do anything. We did not organize the Soviets. They were not organized in 1917: they were created in the revolution of 1905. The people organized the Soviets. When I tell you that the government of the Soviets is superior to the Constituent Assembly, that it is more fundamentally representative of the will of the mass, I do not tell you anything new. As long ago as April 4, I told you that the Soviets were more representative of the people than this Constituent Assembly which you wanted to organize.”

He explained in detail the political break in the Social Revolutionary Party, and said:

“When the people voted for delegates of the Constituent Assembly, they did not know the difference between the Right S. R.’s and the Left. They did not know that when they voted for the Right Social Revolutionists they voted for the bourgeoisie, and when they voted for the Left they voted for Socialism.”

At first he spoke quietly, but before long his

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hands had come out of his pockets. These, and his brown eyes alternately snapping and smiling, and his eyebrows humorously expressive, all vigorously emphasized his phrases.

It was evident from the faces of the men before him that he was justifying himself and them to their satisfaction.

"The February Revolution was a political bourgeois revolution overthrowing Tsarism. In November a social revolution occurred, and the working masses became the sovereign authority. The Workmen's and Soldiers' delegates are not bound by any rules or traditions to the old bourgeois society. Their government has taken all the power and rights into its own hands. The Constituent Assembly is the highest expression of the political ideals of bourgeois society, which are no longer necessary in a Socialist state. The Constituent Assembly will be dissolved.

"If the Constituent Assembly represented the will of the people, we would shout: 'Long live the Constituent Assembly!' Instead we shout: 'Down with the Constituent Assembly!' " he finished.

In the seat next to me was a little Bessarabian

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soldier with black beady eyes and a short, bristling mustache. He had a merry face that crinkled when he smiled. Every now and then he gave his head a queer little shake of amazed admiration and whispered:

“He’s a wise man. He’s a wise man.”

Lenin was saying for the simple Bessarabian just what he would like to have been able to say for himself.

A few of the most conservative men remained unconvinced. The irrepressible Krameroff shouted: “Stydno, Lenin, stydno!” (Shame.) But the vote proved that Lenin was voicing the will of all but a small minority.

Soukhonoff, of the Novia Jizn group, whose leader was Maxim Gorky, gained the floor, and protested against the suppression of the press.

“The people even in Petrograd don’t know what transpired in the walls of Tauride. It is more than a crime; it is a blunder,” he said.

Soukhonoff voiced the attitude of the *Intelligentsia*. The case of Maxim Gorky is rather typical, though Gorky is of a more extreme nature and expresses himself more violently than most of the *literati*. They were all theoretical

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advocates of revolution, but they shrank from the practice of it. The logic of events found them out of sympathy with revolution in the very stage of development that they had prayed and fought for.

During the Kerensky régime, Gorky, through his paper, blasted at the government, and his voice was the loudest, urging the crowd to more extreme measures. When the crowd moved, as crowds always move, in its own way, Gorky could not follow. Ever since the March Revolution he had been ill most of the time, and thus shut off from contact with facts. His opinions necessarily had to be based on reports carried in to him. The woman who has been his companion for many years was a Cadet, and bitter against the Bolsheviki. Much of his news sifted in through her, and naturally he has been influenced by her. Gorky has made his great contribution to Russian revolution—a contribution no man can deny. It is a pity that in his old age he should find himself out of step with his comrades.

The revolutionists of the literary group are not happy in the present situation. Through the years they fought for free speech, free press, and

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free ballot. Suddenly they found the new revolutionists, pragmatists to the last degree, being forced by the exigencies of the situation to use the very same weapons as those of monarchical invention. In order to accept the new gods set up in the economic temple by the proletariat leaders, the literati had to deny, for the moment at least, their old gods. Few of them could make the necessary mental somersault. They found themselves, by virtue of denouncing something in which they did not believe, forced into a defense of something in which they also did not believe.

They published one issue of "Paper Protest," in which they expressed their ideas. Korolenko, Sologub, Kiryakoff, Mijoueff, Mereshkovsky, and several others of the Russian writers who played so vigorous a part in revolutionary education in Russia, wrote brief articles. On the whole the paper was a feeble thing, hardly worthy of the subject or the authors, but indicative of the state of mind of the *Intelligentzia*.

The strike of the *Intelligentzia* continued through January. A few of the strikers in the various ministries went back to work, but most

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of them were still sabotaging. It was this sabotage that led to restrictions upon the amounts of money which might be drawn from the banks. The bourgeoisie, by paying the salaries of the officials, was making the continuation of the strike possible. With unlimited money at their command, the Soviets were powerless to make them go back to work.

"They 'll never stop sabotaging till we hit them in the pocket-book," said one of the speakers at a meeting of the Central Executive Committee, when a proposed decree was under discussion.

It was decided that the gold hoarded in safe-deposit vaults should be seized, and the amounts found deposited to the credit of the owners. It was announced that the interests of small depositors would be protected, and investigation made of the accounts of large depositors.

Even if the Bolsheviki had been able to rally all the *Intelligentzia* to their support, the task of feeding, warming, and clothing Russia would have been an almost impossible one. With starvation forever at their heels, they somehow staved it off from day to day. The black bread grew blacker and more uneatable, and sometimes we

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wondered what strange ingredients besides straw and chaff could have gone into its making.

Since the factories closed for lack of raw material with which to manufacture, the workmen were organized and armed as Red Guardsmen. Even if every factory in Russia had continued to operate, it would not have been possible to supply the needs of the peasants and the army. Just as Germany is one huge factory, Russia is one great granary. Even in peace times, she manufactured but a small part of her necessities. With imports and manufactures both stopped, her condition became desperate. As stocks in the shops dwindled, prices soared correspondingly.

Snow piled up in mountains and valleys on the streets, and driving an *izvostchik* down the Nevsky was like riding on a roller-coaster. Sometimes the street-cars ran, but more often the snow was heaped so high that the tracks were impassable. Sometimes, when they were cleared for action, there was not sufficient coal to operate the electric plants. About half of the cars in Moscow and Petrograd were out of commission for lack of repairs, and thousands of engines and freight-cars were piled upon the sidings in the

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railroad yards. But for the faithfulness of the railroad employees, Russia's condition must have been even worse. Repeatedly they put off their demands for higher wages because they were persuaded by each group of changing powers that the Revolution would suffer. The switchmen's families were without the barest necessities as the price of food went up and the value of the ruble went down. Many times the men threatened strikes, but always their loyalty to the Revolution won the day and the strike would be postponed.

Petrograd, in the closing days of January, became more and more bleak.

The clanging swords and the clicking spurs of officers filing back and forth across the marble lobby in the War Hotel were gone. The hotel had been taken over by the People's Commissaries. In the dining-room I sat down to frugal meals with peasants, workmen, soldiers, agitators, and poets.

Food was daily less plentiful. Cabbage soup, black bread, and *rabchik*, a wild bird for which we all acquired a deathless hatred, made up the daily menu. Only the glasses of steaming tea saved us from gastronomic despair. The supply

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of knives, forks, and spoons, dwindling ever since the beginning of the war, was now almost exhausted. Frequently a single knife served instead of a teaspoon for an entire table. Often we waited for tea until the people across the room finished with their glasses.

Most of the time we were in total darkness. There were no lamps or candles in the halls, and we groped our way up the dark staircases, bumping blindly into one another's arms. There was an unhappy affinity between the electric light, the elevator, and the water system. They all stopped together. Frequently my face remained unwashed until the late afternoon, when I went to the Hotel Europe for tea. The Europe proudly boasted its own electric plant, and it was still possible to live there in comparative comfort and even luxury.

The waiters in the War Hotel complained that there was no money to buy food. A few of them, used to the generous tips of pre-revolutionary days, bemoaned the fall of the monarchy and prayed for the coming of the Germans. They were not the only ones who awaited Prussian deliverance. Most of the upper-class Russians no

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longer made any attempt to hide their willingness to have the Germans come to Petrograd.

Even my little princess friend, Orchidée, who had been educated in France and whose natural sympathies were all with the Allies, admitted to me that she hoped the Germans would come soon. We were lunching together. In the party were an English officer and a Russian who before the Revolution was in charge of the Grand Duchesses' hospital train.

"You don't really mean it," I said.

"Yes, I do," she answered. "I like the English, and I should like to have them come and rule us; but they will not. If the Germans come, we can keep our titles and our estates. Why should n't we want them?"

"And you?" I asked, turning to the other Russian. "Do you feel the same?"

"Yes," he answered. "It is the only hope for us. The Bolsheviki will take all."

They were demonstrating the Marxian theory that one's conduct is dictated by one's economic desires. They were being forced by the new order to give up their privileges, and to ask them to like it was to expect the impossible. For some

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of them the situation was tragic. They were products of the system, just as were the uneducated Russian peasant and the class-conscious revolutionary workers.

One man characterized his country for me by saying:

“Russia is like a badly baked loaf of bread. It is raw on one side and burned on the other. The great peasant mass is left in ignorance and poverty, while the upper class has nothing but luxury and useless culture.”

The luxury was disappearing. The “useless culture” did them little good in a state that recognized no value but that of production. The landowner, suddenly bereft of his estates, like the military man deprived of his epaulets and his salary, was frequently a pathetic figure. The life of the dying class is not easy. On the streets of Moscow and Petrograd, officers were shoveling snow, or selling newspapers, or trucking baggage to buy the barest necessities. In some cases, the women, proving less unfit than the men of the family, had become the bread-winners. The old picture money of the Tsar’s day disappeared, and the post-revolutionary issues of currency, prac-

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tically the only exchange in the market, were accepted with a single sneering word—"Kerensky."

The Anarchists grew more daring in the days immediately following the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly.

"What is the use of government?" the Anarchists asked. "The Bolsheviki promised you bread, and promised you peace. Where is your bread? Where is your peace? All governments are alike—the Bolsheviki just the same as the others! You must take the factories! Take the land! Why do you wait?"

The army had become a hungry horde of ill-shod and ill-clothed men with but a single desire upon earth—to get back to whatever corner of that vast land they called home. They had stayed in the trenches for nearly a year after they had made their first demand for peace. Their committee meetings had become pathetic recitals by the delegates of the conditions of their men. The horses were dying from lack of feed. The men were suffering hideously in the frozen trenches because of lack of boots and clothing.

Again and again the delegates declared:

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"They say they 'll stand it just one more week and that 's all."

When the week was up, in spite of the tortures of cold and hunger, most of them still stayed on. The committees were unequal to the task of provisioning the army. Given the same conditions, any group of officials, any dictator, any Tsar, would have failed equally; but the unthinking critics of Russia persisted in placing all the blame for the disorganization of the army and navy upon the committees. As a matter of fact, the disorganization came first, and the committees afterward. They were an outgrowth of the chaos that immediately followed the fall of the Tsar. They were the attempt of the men themselves to bring some sort of order out of the confusion that naturally resulted when the governor of the Russian engine was suddenly removed.

In July General Denikine, in command in Galicia during the disastrous offensive, made a report to the War Council in which he described conditions existing as early as June, saying:

"We no longer have any infantry. I will make the statement stronger, and say we no longer have any army. The army is in ruins."

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February was almost here.

Nothing had happened to improve the army—everything had happened to complete its disorganization. Considering the condition of that army, the miracle was not that they left the trenches so soon, but that they stayed so long. Considering the frightful conditions in Russia, the amazing thing was not that there was so much violence, but that there was not more.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE GREAT BETRAYAL

LOOKING back, so much is clear!

On a gray November evening out on the Russian front not far from Dvinsk, the gunners, delivering a daily salute to the German trenches, heard a muttered command to stop firing. They turned to face a line of soldiers in coarse mud-colored coats, their trench-tanned faces grimly set beneath shaggy hats of sheepskin.

The gunners shrugged their shoulders and turned to the battery. "Stop firing," again came the command.

"Who said so?" asked one of the gunners.

"We say so," a soldier answered. "Those are our brothers over there. The war is finished. It was the Tsar's war. They are workingmen and peasants like us. They don't want to fight us; we don't want to fight them. Stop firing."

The gunner laughed.

"If you don't stop shooting, we'll shoot you.

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I tell you, you 're killing our brothers," said the soldier again, in the same quiet, final tone.

From that hour the battery was silent. Through the Russian trenches the word had gone that peace was coming. An armistice was to be arranged in a few days, and Germany and Austria and all of Russia's Allies were to be asked to take part.

It was still November. The armistice negotiations were on. The great parley at Brest-Litovsk had commenced. The Allies had not come, but a special train had pulled out of Petrograd with the strangest collection of envoys that ever went upon a foreign mission. There were twenty-eight members, headed by Adolph Joffe, a Russian Jew, and including a soldier, a sailor, a workman, a peasant, and one woman. There were others in the delegation not so glad to go as these. They were military experts, obeying orders from Smolney expressed in terms that permitted no other alternative. They were officers of the Russian army, thoroughly out of sympathy with the undertaking and the men who were making it—every tenet of their codes, every fiber of their poor, bewildered, uncomprehending be-

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ings outraged by this new topsy-turvy world in which they had been plunged.

The train had arrived. The efficient Germans had built a special track across that strip of No Man's Land which divided their territory from that of the Russians. Each member of the party was provided with his own servant, a German soldier who spoke Russian. Shoes and clothes were cleaned, and no detail of preparation had been neglected. In the rooms to which the visitors were taken there was letter paper and *eau de cologne*, for which the Russian has a special fondness.

The Russians proposed their terms of armistice. They demanded that no troops be transferred from the eastern front to the fronts of the Allies during the period of the armistice, and that fraternization take place. General Hoffman declared that the armistice conditions were only such as could be proposed to a defeated nation. The delegates asked for instructions from the Commissaries, and were told to stand firm on these conditions.

Back in Petrograd, Trotzky was talking.

"In our negotiations with our present Allies

**Meeting in the library of the Tauride Palace December 11 where in defiance of the
People's Commissaries the Constituent Assembly was declared open**

The Constituent Assembly as it finally convened in the Tauride Palace January 18

The Russian delegation arrives at Brest-Litovsk

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and enemies, we will be constantly on our guard," he said. "Under no circumstances will we allow them to distort the principles of general peace proclaimed by the Russian Revolution. We will propound to them most categorical questions, and every word pronounced by them or by us will be transmitted by wireless to all the nations of the world, who will be the judges of our negotiations."

Petrograd waited, one ear turned in the direction of Brest-Litovsk, and the other pressed against the world's key-hole, listening for rumblings of revolutions in other lands.

Night after night, in the white hall at Smolney, at the Peasants' headquarters, in the Narodny Dom and the Cirque Modern, the men in the mud-colored uniforms talked about it.

"We soldiers, we trench inhabitants, we must have something to say," I heard one of them declare; and another:

"We can not conduct peace negotiations by going up to the German generals with a copy of Karl Marx in our hands."

And a third:

"We must be able to speak loudly in revolu-

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tionary language, and back our language up by cannon if necessary, but for revolutionary purposes—not for the commercial interests of the Allies.”

“Slava, Slava, Slava” (Words, words, words), said another.

The discussion centered largely on the question of the removal of troops.

“Prohibition of removal of troops to the front should cover reserves in the rear as well, and also cannon,” said a delegate named Lapinsky. “It is necessary for us to guard against all these things in order that the Allied troops and masses should know that the Russian Revolution has no intention of permitting them to be crushed by the Germans. We are not concerned with ourselves only. We must remember that the Germans have not accepted our peace terms. We must deal with the facts as they are. They have accepted our formulæ applying the principles to the Russian camp,—not to the German camp,—to the Poles and others whom they have subjugated. We must see that imperialism in Austria and Germany does not triumph.”

The guns on the Russian front were still.

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The last shot to echo across to us in Petrograd was that with which the Russian General Skaloon at Brest-Litovsk dramatically ended his life in a room adjoining that in which the armistice conference was being held.

General Hoffman had accepted the terms "such as could be proposed only to a defeated nation." The fact that he was humoring the Russians, that he might trick them the more thoroughly in the end, was not evident. The Bolsheviki, disappointed that the Allies had refused to consider coming into their conference, found crumbs of comfort in the concessions of Germany.

"It must mean," they argued, "that the Kaiser fears the German masses. They will make him accept our honest, democratic peace."

December 15 saw the armistice signed, and by noon of the 17th it had gone into effect.

The night before, at a rump convention of the Peasants' Deputies, I heard Leon Trotzky make his report of the proceedings at Brest. He talked for three hours, answering the questions of his soldier peasant audience.

The meeting began in a fashion typical of those days in Russia, where night after night in

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every available hall in Petrograd men were shaking their fists in one another's faces.

The Peasants' Convention had split in its attitude toward the People's Commissaries. The Bolshevik members and the Left Social Revolutionists anticipated welcoming Trotzky as Commissary of Foreign Affairs. The center faction, led by Chernoff, refused to acknowledge him in any capacity but that of private citizen.

In the midst of the discussion, Trotzky arrived. The Bolsheviks jumped to their feet and started a rousing demonstration in which the majority joined. The others sat stolidly in their chairs, and some whistled—the Russian equivalent of a hiss. For ten minutes pandemonium reigned. Trotzky stood silent, head up and eyes flashing behind his glasses. Finally he crossed the room to the adjoining hall, opened the door, and walked in. I followed him. The room was dark, except for a green-shaded student-lamp upon a table near the rostrum. Trotzky sat down at the table. Soon a crowd of soldiers came pouring through the door. More and more followed, until every seat in the council chamber

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and every inch of space in aisles and stairways was packed.

They elected a temporary chairman, and resolved to hear the report of the Commissary of Foreign Affairs. Trotzky arose to speak, and this time the demonstration met no opposing voice.

He reviewed the general international situation, then analyzed the armistice terms.

"We will ask the Germans first if they accept our terms of peace—peace without annexation, contributions, and self-definition of nations," said Trotzky. "Then we will ask what Germany means by those terms—how does she apply them? When we understand each other fully, we will have a week's interruption to let the people of the world know what we are doing. We want general peace. We have given the Allies a month in which to make peace. If they want more time, I suppose we can give them a little more, but we can not continue the slaughter for their sakes. We want general peace, but we can not let Russia bleed to death. We can not go on forever. We must get back to our farms

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and our factories. The Kaiser hates the Revolution, and most of all the Soviet government, but he recognizes the demand of the masses. We did not send any diplomats to Brest-Litovsk, it is true. Our people have spent more time in Siberian prisons than in diplomatic offices, but our program is right, and so long as we fight for that we can not die. We do not go before the governments of the world as a defeated nation, but as a victorious one. Our position is the stronger because we have no secret desires and can be quite honest. The Allies have refused to send delegates to the peace conference, but we must look out for the interests of the masses of the Allied countries, and we will do so. We must have a peace, because we must save the cultural possessions of the age and preserve the revolutionary energy of the proletariat."

Down from Berlin to No Man's Land came a supply of tobacco, accordions, flashlights, bad whisky, and Hindenburg *schneights* (knives). Behind the German lines the soldier merchants set up their wares, and the Russians in worn boots and faded coats walked out across No Man's Land to trade with them. The Germans asked

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for soap, bread, and clothing; also they would sell for rubles—old picture rubles of the Tsar's régime. They turned up their noses at "Kerensky" money, and would have none of the Bolshevik issue.

The Russian soldiers had little bread to give them—they had all too little for themselves—and less clothing. But they told their German brothers, with shining, thankful eyes, how glad they were that peace was coming—that they would no longer have to kill each other. They advised them to go home and make a revolution, as they had done, and promised that in this new world of brothers there should be an end to wars.

Inside the council chamber at Brest-Litovsk, the German Foreign Minister reminded delegates of the season of the year.

"It is an auspicious circumstance that the negotiations open within sight of that festival which for centuries past has promised peace on earth, good will to men," he said. "Our negotiations will be guided by the spirit of peaceable humanity and of mutual esteem."

It was Saturday, December 22. Prince Leopold of Bavaria was there. The Austrian For-

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eign Minister, Count Czernin, with a delegation of eight Austrians, was there; and from Bulgaria, Minister Popoff and four assistants, Nesimiy Bey, former Minister of Foreign Affairs from Turkey, Ambassador Hakki, General Zekki, and under foreign secretary Hemit Bey.

The plenipotentiaries of the Central Powers were taking the delegation seriously. General Hoffman paid gallant compliments to Madame Bitzenko, and laughingly suggested that they have their photographs taken together. Von Kühlmann asked the chief of the Russian delegation to state the main principles of the Russian peace proposal. The Russian demands numbered fifteen, applying the now famous formula to the world situation. On Christmas the Germans submitted their counter-proposals.

In Petrograd we listened day and night for the ticking of a wireless message from Brest-Litovsk. A German and Austrian delegation arrived, and took up headquarters at the Hotel Angletaire and at the Grand just around the corner. Little blond Petroff came in, loudly protesting that he had no platters on which to bring me my dinner, because they had all been

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taken to feed the Germans. Occasionally, with some of my American friends, I sat at dinner at a table adjoining that at which the Germans were dining. We regarded them curiously, and they looked upon us with equal suspicion.

I spent much of my time at Smolney those days, anxious for the first word that would indicate the Russian attitude toward the German peace terms. One day there was a rumor abroad that Russia would reject the counter-proposal.

At Smolney that night the Executive Committee listened to a report, and voted for its rejection. The resolution declared that the dominant parties in Germany, compelled by a popular demand to grant concessions to the principles of a democratic peace, were nevertheless trying to distort the idea to aid their own annexationist policy.

Already Germany was showing her hand. She contended that the will of the people of Poland, Lithuania, and Courland had already been manifested. The Russians declared this allegation to be devoid of all foundation.

"Under martial law and under the yoke of a military censorship, the peoples of the occupied countries could not express their will," they said.

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“The documents upon which the German government bases its allegation at Brest prove the manifestation of the will of a few privileged groups only, and in no way the will of the masses in those territories.

“We now declare that the Russian Revolution remains faithful to the policy of internationalism. We defend the right of Poland, Lithuania, and Courland to dispose of their own destiny, actually and freely. Never will we recognize the justice of imposing the will of a foreign nation on any other nation.”

The Russian Soviet appealed to the people of Germany, Austria, Turkey, and Bulgaria in these words:

“Under your pressure, your governments have been obliged to accept the motto of no annexations and no indemnities, but recently they have been trying to carry on their old policy of evasion. Remember that the conclusion of an immediate democratic peace will depend actually and above all on you. All the people of Europe look to you, exhausted and bled by such a war as there never was before, that you will not permit

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the Austro-German imperialists to make war against Revolutionary Russia for the subjugation of Poland, Lithuania, Courland, and Armenia."

The Soviet bombed the German trenches with propaganda. On January 2 they circulated a pamphlet in the German lines declaring that the peace conditions submitted by the Central Powers showed the German promises of a democratic peace to be unconscionable lies.

The pamphlet asserted that Germany wanted to free the peoples on Russia's western frontier from the sphere of revolution, in order to subjugate them to the German will, that they might impose an Austrian monarchy on Poland and make Lithuania and Courland German duchies.

The Russians asked for transfer of any further negotiations to Stockholm. In Germany the military party declared that the break between Russia and Germany was caused by this demand, keeping their people in ignorance for some time of the fact that the break had come from Germany's refusal to evacuate Russian territory.

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Trotsky himself went to the second conference, protesting that his government would not yield.

"We did not overthrow the Tsar to bow to German imperialism," he said.

Germany practically delivered an ultimatum: "Parleys at Brest-Litovsk or none."

"Our government placed at the head of its program a world's peace, but it promised the people to sign only a democratic and just peace," Trotsky said. "The sympathies of the Russian people are with her Allies and with the working classes of Germany."

He declared that the refusal of the Central Powers to transfer the conference to a neutral site could be explained only by the determination of the government and the annexationist groups to base their dealings, not on reconciliations of peoples, but on the war map.

"But war maps disappear while peoples remain," said Trotsky. "Annexationist agitators are trying to persuade the German people that behind the open and frank policy of Russia is a British or other stage-manager. Therefore we have decided to remain at Brest-Litovsk, so that

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the slightest possibility of peace may not be lost; so that it may be established whether peace is possible with the Central Powers without violence to the Poles, Letts, Armenians, and all other nationalities to which the Russian Revolution assures full right of development, without reservation or restriction."

At this session General Hoffman protested against wireless messages containing abuse of German military institutions and revolutionary appeals to the German troops. He declared they transgressed the spirit of the armistice by attempting to introduce civil war into the Central Powers.

Trotsky replied that all German newspapers were freely admitted into Russia. General Hoffman said he was not referring to the press, but to official government utterances. Kühlmann said that non-interference in Russian affairs was the fixed principle of the German government, and that his government had the right to demand reciprocity.

Trotsky responded with an invitation to criticism:

"The Russians will recognize it as a step for-

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ward if the Germans freely and frankly express their views regarding internal conditions in Russia so far as they think it necessary."

Trotsky demanded, on behalf of the Russians, the immediate repatriation of deported Poles and Lithuanians, and the liberation of Bohemians, Czechs, and others arrested for participation in pacifist propaganda, declaring the return of refugees to Poland and Lithuania of the utmost importance in the question of self-determination, and insisting that the Russians would not abandon their demands. The session ended in disagreement. General Hoffman charged the Russian delegation with speaking as if "it stood victorious in our countries and could dictate conditions."

Kühlmann announced that it would be necessary to hold a consultation between the Teutonic Allies before any further statement could be made.

Meanwhile, the anti-Bolshevist Rada from the Ukraine was holding separate peace parleys with the Central Powers, and, unlike the Soviet government, its negotiations were secret.

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All sorts of rumors found their way to us in Petrograd. German soldiers arriving from the front said they had deserted the army and, with several thousand others, were encamped in a wood behind the German lines, where, equipped with machine-guns, they were defying a German advance on Russia. Strikes were breaking out in Austria and Germany. In Petrograd the third congress of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies met on January 23. On the 27th Leon Trotzky made his report.

It showed that at last the Germans, convinced that resistance upon the part of the Russians was impossible, were unmasking their real aims.

"Practically," he said, "the German terms mean that the governments of Austria and Germany take into their own hands the destiny of the Poles, the Letts, the Lithuanians, and the Esthonians."

Trotzky drew a comparison between the present peace aims, and the peace terms of the Reichstag resolution of July supporting a peace without indemnities and annexations, and the peace terms of the Germany of December 25, which lured the Russians to trust the democratic utter-

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ances of the enemy. He showed that the new frontiers were planned not only to subjugate all the people within the conquered territories, but to make further German aggression easy.

"The whole German argument was based on the assumption that the Russian government would understand, but be silent and grateful to the Germans for saving their faces by giving a mock-democratic character to their peace," said Trotzky. "The bourgeois governments can sign any kind of a peace; the governments of the Soviet can not."

He declared that the Ukrainian Rada was at that moment trying to make a separate peace, and insisted that, whatever happened, he would not sign a "non-democratic peace."

Trotzky sparred for time. He knew that his government could not live surrounded by countries practising a different social creed. He counted on the spread of revolt simultaneously in the Ukraine, in Finland, in Austria, and in Germany. He did not foresee the German-inspired invitation to German troops to put down revolution in Finland, Ukraine, and the Baltic provinces.

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On the ninth of February the Ukraine, upon which France had banked to keep Russia from making a peace, concluded a separate peace herself. The following day the Soviet government announced its withdrawal from the war, and also its determination not to sign an annexationist treaty, declaring its firm belief that the workers of Germany and Austria would not permit any new offensive against the workers of Russia.

Five days later Germany announced her intention to resume military operations against Russia. On the 18th, to the amazement of the populace behind the Russian line, the German troops along the entire front advanced.

They took Dvinsk with little opposition. It was late afternoon in a snow-clad village beyond the Dvinsk lines not far from the point at which, in November, the infantry had ordered the Russian gunners to stop firing. Word had come that the Germans were advancing. A shudder passed through the village. There was a hurried gathering. Some suggested fleeing, others counseled waiting.

"It's a mistake," said a white-bearded peas-

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ant. "We are not at war. They are our brothers—we must go and tell them."

They appointed a committee, improvised a white flag, and set out on their errand. A short distance from the village they met the advancing Germans. They held their white flag bravely aloft, and a soldier spokesman began to explain:

"It is all a mistake—Russia is not at war. We do not want to fight our German brothers—"

The sentence was never finished. The committee did not come back. Instead, to the waiting women with frightened children clinging to their wide calico skirts, and with a terrible fear in their eyes, there came the Germans.

Germany was marching over the prostrate and bewildered form of the country she had tricked and betrayed. Uncomprehension and despair settled upon Petrograd. The People's Commissaries met in all-night session. Trotzky wanted to fight, even though effective resistance was impossible. Lenin opposed him. There was nothing to fight with. The army had reached the limit of disorganization. Economic chaos

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reigned behind the lines. There was neither an army at the front nor a nation behind capable of supporting an army.

All night the Commissaries debated. Toward dawn Lenin's will finally prevailed. A proclamation was issued protesting against the German advance, but stating:

"The Council of People's Commissaries regards itself as forced formally to declare its willingness to sign a peace upon the conditions dictated by the delegates of the Quadruple Alliance at Brest-Litovsk."

The information was sent by wireless to Germany. The Germans demanded written confirmation. It was despatched to Dvinsk by special messenger. Still the Germans' advance continued. They occupied Esthonia, overran the Ukraine, and created a Turkish offensive in the Caucasus. They made no answer to the People's Commissaries, and on February 22 the Bolsheviks called on the people to organize guerrilla warfare and resist the invaders.

Again the Bolsheviks appealed to the German working classes.

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“Once more the German working class in this threatened hour has shown itself insufficiently determined to stay the criminal hand of its own militarism. We had no other choice but to accept the conditions of German imperialism until a revolution changes or cancels them. The German government is not hastening to reply to us, evidently aiming to seize as many important positions in our territory as possible. The enemy has occupied Dvinsk, Werder, and Lutsk, and is continuing to strangle by hunger the most important centers of the Revolution. We even now are convinced firmly that the German working classes will rise against the attempts of the ruling classes to stifle the Revolution, but we can not predict with certainty when this will occur. The German imperialists may hesitate at nothing for the purpose of destroying the authority of the councils and taking the land from the peasants.”

The Commissaries called on all loyal councils and army organizations to use all efforts to recreate the army.

The next day Kühlmann submitted a new offer of peace, imposing yet more drastic terms upon

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the broken country, and demanded that it be accepted within forty-eight hours.

Again Lenin insisted that it must be accepted.

"Their knees are on our chests and our position is hopeless," he said. "This peace must be accepted as a respite enabling us to prepare a decisive resistance to the bourgeoisie and imperialists. The proletariat of the whole world will come to our aid. Then we shall renew the fight. All the bourgeoisie in Russia is jubilant at the approach of the Germans. Only a blind man, or men infatuated by phrases, can fail to see that the policy of a revolutionary war without an army is water in the bourgeois mill. In the bourgeois papers there is already exaltation in view of the impending overthrow of the Soviet government by the Germans. We are compelled to submit to a distressing peace."

Trotsky was absent from this meeting, and the Central Executive Committee, by a vote of a hundred and twelve against eighty-four, accepted Lenin's view; and the decision was telegraphed to the German government.

"Surely now hostilities would cease!" thought the Russians.

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A new peace deputation was elected. Trotzky, who favored fighting, was displaced as Foreign Minister. The German government did not reply to the Russian acceptance. The German troops kept marching on. The Soviet government called upon the people:

“Resistance becomes the principal task of the Revolution.”

The workers filled the ranks of the volunteer “Red Army,” led by officers of the bourgeoisie. There was hardly a factory worker left in Petrograd, and, untrained as they were, they were soldiers because they had a cause. The German advance was checked at Pskoff. The Red Guards recaptured Orsha. The regular troops, an uncomprehending horde of bewildered and dilapidated soldiers, fled in panic before their “German brothers,” looting and pillaging as they went.

It was a hopeless situation. The Red Guards had not only to fight the highly organized German legions, but they had to disarm the panic-stricken Russian soldiers. In the rear they were fighting Kaledin, Korniloff, and the troops of the Ukrainian Rada. None of these were fight-

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ing the Germans. In action they had alined themselves with German absolutism, and were seeking to overthrow the Russian democracy—the Soviet government.

The diplomats had been so busy hunting for German money in the camp of the Bolsheviki that they had overlooked entirely the Ukraine, the Baltic provinces, and Finland. The Ukraine situation has been shot through with Austrian and German money since the beginning of the Revolution. It had been a hot-bed of intrigue. More potent than the power of money was the natural economic desire of the upper classes in each of these places. It was not the Ukrainian worker and peasant who made a separate peace with Germany. It was not the Finnish Red Guard who invited the Germans in to subjugate their fellow countrymen. It was not the class-conscious masses of the Baltic provinces, crushed beneath the boot of the German-bred Black Barons, who cried to the Kaiser for deliverance.

Something more dangerous to the peace of the world than a government of workers, peasants, and soldiers had been carefully builded by the German agents.

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When Prince Leopold of Bavaria told his advancing troops they were going upon a mission of altruism and humanity, he neglected to tell them that the people whom they were going to save were not the masses of the Russians, trying to work out their own salvation against desperate odds, but the land barons and monarchists of the old order whom the Revolution overthrew.

The Russians were blind to the true character of the men who came to Brest-Litovsk to negotiate a kaiser's peace; but the blindness of those Russian dreamers was lucid vision as compared with the blindness of the enlightened democratic world as to the real significance of the various forces at work upon the Russian tragedy. We will pay for that blindness,—we must pay,—for democracy is not safe in the world while Russia is enslaved. No settlement of the international situation will be lasting that does not leave the peoples of Russia free to work out their own democratic salvation.

The failure of Allied diplomacy in Russia was due to the undemocratic nature of the existing diplomatic system.

It is not enough to know the movements of

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kings and kaisers, the pleasure of military leaders, of the will of the aristocracy. In a fight for democracy, the people, in the last analysis, are the important factor. The true study of democratic diplomacy is the study of the movements of the masses undisturbed by our own beliefs, preconceptions, or prejudices.

They were difficult—those Russians; difficult as dreamers and children always are. They lashed us with their scorn. They impugned our motives. They “swept into the ash-barrel of history” our secret treaties and dismissed us as capitalists and imperialists.

The German autocracy, arch-enemy of all democracy, had succeeded in its gigantic scheme to drive a wedge between Russia and her Allies—had trapped Russia into the belief that the German people wanted nothing but an honest democratic peace, and that only the Allies stood between them and their desire. In their minds, our aloofness gave color to the declaration of their leaders:

“Our Revolution will be crushed by the imperialism of the western democracies.”

Germany proposed new peace terms. The

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Russian delegates did not even stop to examine them. They said they knew they must sign whatever the terms might be. They signed a peace that was not a peace—a peace that Germany disregarded more flagrantly each passing hour—a peace that will never be a peace.

“It is our peace of Tilsit [1810],” Lenin said; “but we will finally attain our peace of 1814. Probably we shall not have to wait so long, because history is moving faster in these days.”

Truly, the Commissary of Commissaries was right: “their knees are upon our chests.”

A MESSAGE TO MARS

WE were five in the little blue room in the War Hotel that night. It was one of my last in Petrograd. The electric lights, fickle at best, had failed entirely.

The tiny sputtering flame of the olive-green candle disclosed distant vistas in the eyes of Zamiatin.

Zamiatin was one of the younger of the Russian writers—a deep, quiet, imaginative chap, who talked in fables, with long spaces of silence between.

The Bolsheviki were the subject of our discussion. We argued breathlessly, with flushed faces and shining eyes, as one always argued in Russia during the hectic nights and days of the red Russian year.

Zamiatin put down his glass of tea, and with his forefinger began to trace the crimson pattern on the Bokhara table-cover.

“When I was a boy,” he said, “a little fellow

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about thirteen or fourteen, I read a book—I have forgotten the name—a Russian version of something like ‘A Romance of Two Worlds.’ It set strange imaginings whirling in my brain. I told my comrades about it, and they became as excited as I.

“Off there in the big black sky above the silver birches was a planet called Mars, peopled like ours with human beings. We made up our minds to get into communication with those other people. We thought of many plans. Finally we conceived the idea of building a great letter ‘A’ and setting it on fire. We believed Mars would see and answer us, and in a very short time we would arrange an alphabet and carry on long conversations. Perhaps it would revolutionize the whole universe—who knew? We were on fire with the idea.

“We told our parents about it, but somehow they did not seem to realize its importance. There was a famine in the village that year, and they were busy trying to get food to the people. They had no time for us and our great scheme.

“But this did not discourage us. . We went on just the same. We cut down logs in the forest,

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and built a monster 'A,' bigger even than our dreams of it. The great night came. We set it on fire, and then, standing in breathless silence, eyes fastened on the velvet blackness, we waited. We waited and we waited. Nothing happened. Mars did not answer."

Zamiatin lifted his finger from the crimson spot upon the Bokhara cover, and settled back in his chair. For a moment we sat there, tense and quiet as that group of small boys on the edge of the forest a score of years ago.

They built a letter "A" there in the City of Peter in the fall of 1917. They set it afire. Then—simple, trusting, hoping children that they are—they waited—and waited. There was nothing wrong with the letter "A," but Mars did not answer.

Blinded by schemes of conquest and dreams of Empire, Mars could not see.

"Universal peace; brotherhood; no annexations or contributions; and self-definition of nations—"

It was an alphabet Mars could not comprehend, born of a blind faith the glory and beauty of which Mars can not know, and the rest of us only half suspect.

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Zamiatin was not a Bolshevik. He belongs to the Russian *intelligentsia*. Like the others, he had preached theoretical revolution, but his spirit shrank from the hard, accomplished fact.

But Zamiatin, with his boy's experience and his artist's visioning, had seen the letter 'A,' and felt the wonder and the tragedy of the dream of those men drawn back from exile to flash flaming signals at the universe.

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The train that carried me away from Petrograd was almost the last to pass in safety through war-torn Finland. Troubled days were full upon her, but the frozen face of her was as calm and peaceful as a sleeping child.

The City of Peter lay behind me, wrapped in the gray morning mist. Tragedy was in the air. That vague, frightful thing—the Terror—was on every man's tongue. Apprehension was in every man's eye. Lurking there in the black shadows of every human brain were the words: "The Germans!" To a few they were a secret hope—restored titles, estates returned. To the

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mass—death and destruction and shattered dreams.

I looked through the mist down a long vista of coming years, and asked of the mysterious, inscrutable city what would be left of the hour and the place for another age.

Time seems to have his own peculiar sense of values. He sifts out most of the things we would save. For every time the world of to-day thinks of the Franco-Prussian War it speaks a hundred times of the French Revolution. Out of the defeat of France there came that great historic milestone marking the struggle of the mass to climb from under.

Out of the success of Prussia there came Prussian militarism, to breed its own ultimate destruction. Time may reject the battle of the Somme and the Gallipoli campaign, and dismiss the blockade and the submarine with a word; possibly he will have forgotten entirely the names of Cabinet ministers and great generals: but I doubt whether he will discard the Russian Revolution.

Revolution is the blind protest of the mass against their own ignorant state. It is as impor-

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tant to Time as the first awkward struggle of the amoeba. It is man in the act of making himself.

Time will be able to overlook the pathetic, the tragic, the cruel, the silly forms of expression that revolt frequently takes, and see only the magnificent urge behind those expressions.

Time will have all the advantage over us. He will be able to keep his emotions from getting tangled up in the situation. He will be able to put the Bolsheviki and the Mensheviki, the Cadets and the Social Revolutionists, in their proper pigeonholes.

Time will give to the world war, the political revolution, and the social revolution their true values. We can not do it. We are too close to the facts to see the truth.

To have failed to see the hope in the Russian Revolution is to be as a blind man looking at a sunrise.

Mingled with my sorrow, the morning I left Petrograd, was a certain exultant, tragic joy. I had been alive at a great moment, and knew that it was great.

THE END

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